

AMERICA

A-CATHOLIC-REVIEW-OF-THE-WEEK

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The Federal Housing Plan

AN impressive mass of statistics, truly appalling in their implications of human misery, might be brought to bear upon housing conditions as they exist in our larger cities. Briefly, they show that a considerable percentage of the urban population finds its only refuge in houses that are barely fit for human habitation. Since these rookeries and "Pullman" tenements can supply a moderate degree of protection against the inclemency of the elements, they may in this respect, at least, qualify as "homes." But rated by every reasonable standard, they are a menace to the physical, and often to the moral welfare of those who because of slender means, are forced to make use of them.

The phenomenon is nothing new in this country. Cheaply built dwelling houses are a most profitable investment, and the high rents extorted for their inadequate accommodations constitute our commonest and most cruel form of usury. It is this usury that has blocked the efforts of cities and of private groups to destroy the slums. Some progress has been made, but practically all our large cities are still disgraced by slum districts which flourish rankly, since their usurious owners are able to defy the law of God and man with equal present impunity.

In view of this social evil, it is not surprising that a supply of decent homes at low rentals soon became one of the problems of the Public Works Administration. About \$250,000,000 have already been allotted for this project, and in many cities the Government has taken title to various properties under its right of eminent domain. In November, 1934, the Government filed a condemnation suit in the Federal District Court at Louisville, which was vigorously fought by some 147 property

owners. The Government's suit was dismissed by Federal Judge Dawson, with a wealth of pungent and pertinent comment, and on July 15, the Government's appeal to the Circuit Court at Cincinnati was dismissed by a vote of two to one. In the decision, the majority judges rejected the Government's claim on every point. Whether the Government will appeal to the Supreme Court, has not been announced, but Secretary of the Interior Ickes, in a statement given to the press, expressed his belief that the decision hampered but did not destroy the Federal housing project. There is a degree of optimism in this belief which, despite our sympathy with the project, we are quite unable to share. In our view, the Government is trying to do something that needs to be done, but which the Constitution does not authorize it to undertake.

It is admitted that this is not the view presented by the Court at Cincinnati, which contented itself with more palmary constitutional objections. Premising that the right of eminent domain, although nowhere directly conceded in the Constitution, pertains to the Federal Government, the Court observed that the right could be exercised only "when the property is to be taken for a public use." The Government contended that "public use" was established, since the project would relieve unemployment, and the sale or rental of the houses would provide persons of low income with an opportunity to improve their living conditions. But the Court was unable to admit that these purposes, even if they could be made effective, "can be said to constitute public use," in the received meaning of the phrase.

Further, the Court drew attention to the looseness with which the Act was drawn. This defect, noted by the Supreme Court in other Recovery cases, was sufficient to make the delegation of authority improper. The Act provided the President with no standards, nor did it require

that his acts be based on findings of facts, made by himself or any other official; and it nowhere defined what was meant by "slum," "slum clearance," or "low-cost house or housing project." Finally, it put no limitation as to the use of funds on the administrator of the project, but left all "to the unfettered discretion or choice of the President through his administrator, without any standard by which he is to act."

The primary effect of the decision is to disallow condemnation proceedings for the housing project. But the implications are much wider. Since Congress may appropriate money for public uses only, and since the provision of homes is not a public use, it would follow that the Government cannot spend money to purchase sites and houses, or even to build houses in those instances in which sites have been provided by cities or States. But the right of the States to institute condemnation suits is not affected, and thus it is barely possible that the Government's plan may be continued on a loan basis through cooperation with private and public associations in the States.

It seems improbable that this ruling will be reversed by the Supreme Court, since at best the right of the Government to build and rent or sell houses is highly dubious. Judge Dawson challenged the Government's counsel to indicate the clause in the Constitution which authorized this venture, and was met either by silence, or by eloquent and totally irrelevant orations on the need of proper housing. The need is undoubted, but it does not follow that the Government is authorized to meet it. The simple truth is that the duty of depriving blood-thirsty usurers of their ill-gotten gains, and of aiding the people to better their housing conditions, rests upon the local units of government. Until the Constitution is changed, it must continue to rest there.

The President on Religious Liberty

A MAJOR objective of our campaign on Mexico was achieved on July 16 when President Roosevelt, in a statement written in his own hand, publicly grouped himself with those who believe in freedom of religion, "not only in the United States, but in other nations." Thus at last our country has been officially disassociated from the persecuting regime in Mexico, and it must now be clear that this great nation looks with disfavor upon religious persecution everywhere, but particularly in Mexico. The effect in Mexico of this declaration must be great, and if the persecutors do not immediately see the handwriting on the wall, at least suffering lovers of liberty in that country will take new heart in the fight they are waging, which is the fight of lovers of liberty everywhere.

It cannot be said that the President's statement was a mere generality. The Congressmen who appeared before him, twenty-two of them, were not appearing on behalf of religious liberty in Ethiopia, Barataria, or the Klondike, but precisely and exclusively on behalf of religious liberty in Mexico. The answer the President made,

therefore, was an answer to their petition, and it was taken as such all around the world. In particular, dispatches from Mexico indicate clearly that it was understood there as having direct reference to that country, while including with it all countries which persecute religion. If Germany sees a lesson in it, and Russia, so much the better. But the fact remains that our Government has at last made known its position in regard to the persecution now raging beyond the Rio Grande. That fact cannot be rubbed out.

For those who brought about this desirable conclusion we have nothing but praise. Besides the two leaders, it would be invidious to single out the names of all the twenty-two Congressmen for special mention, for we are informed that many more eagerly demanded places on the committee, which had necessarily to be restricted in number. All the 242 signers of the petition, two-thirds of whom were Protestant and Jewish, deserve to the full the credit for a noble gesture for liberty, a gesture that may very well, and we hope it will, have a profound influence on events in Mexico, and maybe elsewhere. Religious liberty down there is not yet achieved. Much yet remains to be done. Our forces must be unified, and we must have a common objective. Our union with our suffering brethren in Mexico must be perfected and made more fruitful of results. No mere *modus agendi* or temporary settlement depending on the precarious good will of one or two men will satisfy the Mexican Church or the Mexican laymen. What has been won must be consolidated and extended, and we must not rest until a conclusion satisfactory to the Mexicans themselves has been reached.

To Messrs. John P. Higgins and Clare Gerard Fenerty, authors of the petition, we offer our respectful congratulations and good wishes.

Balking the Farmer

ECHOING Mr. Toots, Secretary of Agriculture Wallace says that the decision of the Federal Court of Appeals at Boston on July 16 on the processing tax, is "of no consequence," until it is affirmed by the Supreme Court. It is true that the ruling itself is, in this sense, of no consequence, but it is far from true that the reasons on which the Court based its conclusions can be brushed aside with equal facility.

It is clear that the recent decisions of the Supreme Court in the *Schechter* and other cases are controlling the views of the lower Federal courts. The Court at Boston held that the Act authorizing the tax was, first, an attempt to regulate products which were under the control of the State, next, that the Act was an improper delegation of power, inasmuch as it laid down no standards and no satisfactory restrictions upon Federal officials, and, finally, that if the processing charge were a tax, it was a direct tax, not properly apportioned, and that if it were an excise, it was not uniform.

Stripped of legal phraseology, the meaning of the ruling is perfectly clear. As long as the Constitution stands, the Federal Government may not do by indirect

tion what it is not authorized to do directly. It may not enter the States to assume control of matters under State jurisdiction, unless it can show that these matters infringe upon rights given it by the Constitution. State commerce and production are not inter-State commerce and production, and cannot be controlled by Congress, except when they directly and substantially interfere with the right of the Government to regulate inter-State commerce. Neither the Supreme Court nor any other court, can declare that black is white or that yes is no, no matter how desirable the white and the no may be. All are bound by oath to base their findings on the Constitution. Finally, Congress may not use the taxing power to promote certain social reforms, however plausible or even necessary, but only for the purposes stated in the Constitution. These reforms must be achieved by the use of other means, and, if necessary, by amending the Constitution.

It is difficult to understand what reasonable objection can be made to the conclusions reached by the courts in this or in the housing-project case. The courts cannot change the Constitution. Only the people of the States have that power. The sole power, and duty, of the courts, is to enforce the fundamental law of the land.

Lobbyists at Washington

THE House investigation of the lobbyists who have been instructing Congress on the evils of the bill to regulate public utilities began with much heat and little light. Charges of mendacity filled the air, and making due allowance for mutual misunderstanding, the honor or dishonor seems about equal. Statuary Hall in the Capitol does not seem an ideal place for confidential communications, even if care be taken to avoid the "whispering gallery," which is always pointed out to gaping tourists. It is possible that a young and eager representative for the Government made use, in the heat of his resentment against what seemed bad faith, of words that he did not fully mean. It is also possible, and seems probable, that his adversary put a construction upon these words which, in the light of calm investigation, they cannot bear.

It is certain, however, that a real investigation of the lobbyists at Washington, with remedial measures following, is among the country's greatest needs. The lobbyist, as we observe him today, is the fell product of a perfectly legitimate usage. It is the constitutional right of every citizen to petition Congress, or any official, for a redress of grievances. The citizen who believes that pending legislation will work him an injury, if enacted, is wholly within his rights when he presents his reasons to Congress, or to any member of Congress. He is not necessarily a blight on the landscape when he invites a friendly member to his house and discusses his grievances over the tea cups. What is proper in an individual is equally proper in a corporation. The individual and the corporation are both within their rights in making use of every legitimate means, including an information bureau, to urge the justice of their claims.

This sort of lobbyist may be a nuisance, but he is not a danger. The lobbyist who makes himself a menace is the lobbyist who uses illegal or immoral means to influence votes in Congress. Members may be warned that political opposition will be fostered in their districts. Financial legislation, for instance, may be shaped by reminding recalcitrant members that their notes are about to fall due at the bank, and that, should this legislation be adopted, the bank will not be able to renew them. Business houses in which members are interested will likewise be unable to obtain the accommodations usually granted almost as a matter of course. Members of a baser sort may be influenced by direct grants of money, although nothing of this sort has been substantiated by evidence in many years, or by similar advantages. Other methods, still lower in the moral scale, are occasionally used. In the end, the result is the same. The member does not vote according to the dictates of his conscience, but against his conscience, under pressure.

The utility companies have already admitted the expenditure of about \$300,000 for propaganda against the utility bill. It is their claim that every penny was used in a highly legal and even moral manner. An amusing incident in the campaign was their insertion of expensive advertising in newspapers throughout the country, calling upon all citizens to rise in defense of the Constitution. Whatever merits the utilities may possess, a sense of humor is not among them. Money was also used to publish books and pamphlets, and to pay the fees of corporation lawyers.

Provided that the companies were authorized by their owners—whoever they may be—to make these expenditures, no moral or legal exception can be taken. But since they have admitted so much, the utilities might be induced by a penetrating and fearless cross-examiner to admit more. They do not all come to the bar with clean hands. The little incident disclosed on July 16, when it was stated by the manager of the Western Union at Warren, Pa., that 1,300 telegrams were sent out by the representative of a utility company, is not reassuring. The signatures were picked at random from the city directory and, in 1,297 cases, without the knowledge of their owners.

We need an investigation, but unless it is thorough and fearless, it will only make a bad case worse. It should not be confined to the utility lobbyists. If the Government, relying on its control of a five-billion-dollar relief fund, is also using lobbyists, the country should know that, too.

Bullets and Lollipops

IT is generally admitted that the State of New York has a good system of parole. That it is not better is due to the wiles of politicians, not to the weakness of its administrators. These are anxious to help the ex-prisoner who really wishes to begin a new life, but they are equally anxious to return to prison any who try to use the system as protection in a new criminal career.

In a recent statement, the parole commissioner, Joseph

J. Canavan, struck a note that is new in parole-board reports, when he stressed the number of convicts that had been sent back to prison. "The parole system is acting firmly and relentlessly," said Mr. Canavan. "We do not wait until the paroled prisoner commits a new crime. We take no chances, but send him back as soon as he disregards the parole regulations. You can't fight bullets with lollipops." The parole system needs exactly what Mr. Canavan is trying to give it, and what it must have everywhere, if it is to be a useful institution.

Chief Hoover, of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, said at the Atlantic City convention of police heads that the parole system is perfect in theory, but in practice a national scandal. His opinion was adopted, in substance, by the convention. It is not a friendly act to try to cover up the faults of the system in actual operation. Unless they are brought out into the open, public opinion will never force the politicians to keep hands off. For many years this Review, a supporter of the theory underlying the system, has been calling for better methods in practice, and for most of the time it has been a lone voice in urging reform. If the parole boards cannot deal with prisoners kindly, yet "firmly and relentlessly," they benefit neither the prisoners nor the public.

Note and Comment

Congress and Mexico

CATHOLICS should be aware that in the events leading up to the commitment made by the President last week on religious liberty, with a reference to Mexico so obvious that it was missed nowhere, an informal committee of Congressmen played a leading part. This committee, though the leading parts were played by two Catholics, Representatives John Higgins, a Democrat, and Clare Fenerty, a Republican, contained many non-Catholics, who in some cases generously risked political preferment to join the movement. A petition was circulated by this committee and a bloc forming a majority of the House signed it, and kept up the agitation until finally the President consented to receive the petition, and by his statement served notice on Mexico of where he stood. Speeches by Messrs. Higgins and Fenerty were the overture. On June 21, Representative Boylan, who has long been known for his sympathy with the persecuted Mexicans, made another speech. The following week Representative Francis D. Healey, of Massachusetts, carries on the fight; and on July 12, Representative James A. Shanley, of Connecticut, another of the group of brilliant young "first-year" Catholics in the House, in a scholarly address showed clearly the international justification for action by this country. Never before has the *Congressional Record* contained so much about Mexico and that without a single reply from the other side, if there is one, which we doubt. In all that follows Catholics will keep all these men in mind, for it was they who have really brought the Mexican situation so strongly before the attention of the public.

Spanish Constitutional Revisions

THE Spanish Constitution was adopted on December 9, 1931. Written by the revolutionary Leftists, it had, as our readers will remember, a violent anti-Catholic and Socialist character. Today, after nearly four years, drastic modifications are proposed, dealing with the articles on Church and family (which Catholics have always wished to have changed), with other articles on education and ownership, and also with revisions of a more purely political kind. In all, change is planned for more than forty-one out of the 125 articles of the Constitution. The President of the Republic, who has never approved the Constitution's anti-Catholic provisions, himself initiated the study looking toward reformation. And together with Gil Robles, the present Minister of War, there are seven Catholics in the Council of Ministers. The Council will soon offer the Chamber its plan for amendment. It is proposed to suppress at once the famous Article 26, which seized the property of the Church and discontinued allowances for the clergy. Based on this article was the law which prohibited teaching by Religious, established official laicism, dissolved the Jesuits, and nationalized their properties. This law, too, will be repealed. The present Cortes cannot modify this Constitution; only a new Cortes, elected as a constituent congress and voting by a two-thirds majority, can do so. But it is expected that in the future elections, despite vigorous opposition by the Left parties, the nation will overwhelmingly elect those deputies who run on a platform of Constitutional reform.

Soviet Trade Pact

BY the new trade agreement which the Administration has concluded with the Soviet Government, the latter sees its way, according to its announced purpose, to purchase \$30,000,000 worth of goods in the United States during the coming year. This may seem like a fairly large amount, until we reflect that the same Government purchased \$138,200,000 worth of American products in the year 1930, at the peak of Soviet trade with the United States. Since that time American exports tumbled abysmally to a scarce fifteen per cent of what they were in 1930. The recognition of Russia, for which such a terrific pro-Soviet campaign was waged, was spurred on by glittering promises that were held out to American manufacturers—anything from \$300,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000 which M. Litvinov had offered to the amazed participants in the World Economic Conference in London. Yet recognition brought no comfort to either U. S. or U. S. S. R. American exports declined in 1933 to \$8,972,000, Soviet exports to the United States to \$12,120,000 in the same year; and there was little advance in 1934—an increase of some \$6,000,000 in the combined volume of trade between the two countries. Moscow comment upon the present agreement is chilly. At best it allows certain tariff adjustments, so as to facilitate extra sales by some private American concerns, and it assists the Soviet manganese industry. But it does not

grant the one boon for which the Soviets forever plead: that the United States Government pledge its own revenues, raised from the taxpayers of this country, in order to pay the bills that Russia wishes to contract in the process of equipping its immense army as the major fighting force of the world. Nor is it likely that such a pledge will be made, as long as our Government has any concern for the peace of the world.

Dotty Mae and Her Money

BEFORE the Supreme Court of the State of New York on June 27 did come the firm of the Dotty Mae Dress Co., Inc., appearing *v. Mintz et al.*, and asking for a receivership for the Dress Code Authority and injunctive relief pending disposal of the funds and property of the said Dress Code Authority. It seems that Dotty Mae had, along with others, paid its dues to the Code Authority and now that the Blue Eagle is dead it wanted its money, or what was left of it, back. But it also seems that whatever had happened to the Blue Eagle the Dress Code Authority was anything but dead, but continuing, as it had before NRA, as a voluntary fair-practice agreement. Whereupon Mr. Justice Edward S. Dore, sitting in Special Term, Part I, of said Court, did decide that no receivership should be imposed on such an excellent body. Moreover he declared that "if the members of the dress industry have the enlightened self-interest, the good sense, and fairness of continuing their cooperative efforts to obtain fair standards of wages, hours, working and other conditions in the industry by voluntarily continuing such efforts through this Code Authority, even without the coercive sanctions of Federal law, it is not the part of judicial discretion at this time . . . to thwart these beneficent purposes." All of which strikes us as good sense as well as good law.

Heroes Must Be Conscious

SOME twenty-five years ago the Catholic chaplain of the City Hospital in New York Harbor jumped into the treacherous waters of the East River and thereby rescued a drowning man. The chaplain was concerned only about donning dry clothes and going about his business, but his friends applied for a Carnegie medal for heroism. Lest they err in conferring so signal an honor, the medal commission quizzed the chaplain, and asked him if he had reflected on what he was doing when he made the jump. "Not at all," said Father Ryan, "I saw the poor man in the water and went in after him." "Ruled out!" decided the commission. "The medal is awarded only for conscious heroism." For which Father Ryan was duly grateful, since he looked for his medals in the life to come. Similar ruling seems to have been applied in the case of John Tomashunas, coal-miner of Shickshinny, Pa., who was trapped with seven other workers behind a fall at the Mocanaqua mine four years ago. One of the two survivors of this horror was Tomashunas, who saved his companion by calming him in their underground prison. An effort was made, says a New York Times dispatch,

to obtain for Tomashunas a Carnegie medal, but "the commission ruled that he was not eligible because it was in the line of duty." Incidentally poor John Tomashunas met his death—medal or no medal—from an insect bite a few days ago. This Carnegie canniness may be an excellent principle. Awarders of medals are free to choose their own standards and requirements; nor is it ours to criticize them. But it does seem as if somewhere, in our great and noble land, there might be medals awarded to those who are unconsciously heroic, or who do heroic deeds in the course of ordinary duty.

Parade Of Events

FAT people bulked large on the front pages. . . . A four-hundred-pound European poultry dealer was operated on for acute massiveness. Ninety pounds of fat were carved off him. He was said to be resting comfortably. . . . Another reducing technique, that of sandpapering the fat away, was being perfected. . . . Seventeen tons of fat men frolicked at the dinner of the U. S. Fat Men's Club in Massachusetts. . . . In a sincere effort to keep the tonnage of New York school teachers down, authorities refused a license to an overweight pedagogue. Brainy corpulence was barred, critics cavilled, while thin fat-heads were passed. . . . Hearing that her boy suffered agonies from nostalgia at a C.C.C. camp, a mother sued the corps for damages. Her offspring never had nostalgia at home, she said. . . . A Western man does not want the words *At Rest* on his coffin. Out of work, he has been at rest for years and wants a change after death. . . . Adversaries of the parole system were increasing. A New York man opposed it because while he was in jail he had his food brought to him; outside he has to walk for his meals and finds it inconvenient. . . . A tale of altruism comes from the West. An undertaker's son saved a drowning man at the risk of his life, and did his father out of a job. . . . Seething experts felt that the international situation was still seething. . . . Hitler's method of eating asparagus was causing dissatisfaction among German students. . . . On account of the unsettled weather no opening date has yet been set for the war between Italy and Ethiopia. It was said Mussolini would throw out the first bomb. Ethiopian troops were being equipped with tsetse flies; Italians with tsetse fly swatters. Only one war has been scheduled, it was said.

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"Definitely Cleaner" Films

GERARD B. DONNELLY, S.J.

DURING their recent convention in Seattle the Catholic Daughters of America passed an unhappily worded resolution on the motion pictures. It is also painful to record here that two unofficial spokesmen, despite a surprising lack of acquaintance with the real issues, enlarged upon the resolution for the national press.

Lest these sentences be thought to spring from prejudice, I hasten to state that in common with everybody else who reads the newspapers I have nothing but profound admiration for the Daughters and for their very impressive record. But just the same one can be sorry that the Daughters did not approach this matter of the pictures with more care, courtesy, and knowledge, and did not rest satisfied with endorsing the Legion of Decency and with pledging the 200,000 members to its continued support. Unfortunately, the convention inserted in its resolution a brief estimate of the current state of film morals or—what amounts to the same thing—of the Legion's present success. And hardly in recent history has a fine achievement been damned with fainter praise.

Since that is a complaint of some moment, let me suggest the facts that serve as the basis. Here is a list of ten motion pictures selected from the films that were on view in New York City exactly two years ago—that is to say, in July and August, 1933: (1) "Baby Face," (2) "Jennie Gerhardt," (3) "Lily Turner," (4) "Hold Your Man," (5) "Midnight Mary," (6) "Song of Songs," (7) "Morning Glory," (8) "No Marriage Ties," (9) "Bed of Roses," (10) "Private Life of Henry VIII." I have no space to describe in detail the content or nature of these films. But perhaps the reader will recall that the ten of them, together with a lot of others current at the time, drew the bitter objections of every critic who had the cause of decency at heart. Perhaps it was because some of the pictures were preaching pagan ideals of conduct, justifying the commission of evil, or presenting sin as amusing, negligible, or even as good. Perhaps it was because all of them were said to be smeared with salaciousness. But whether or not the reader remembers these particular films, he will recall that a very high percentage of pictures during that season—even when they did not romanticize seduction and adultery, and even when they broke away from the current cycle of going-to-have-a-baby comedies and tragedies—relied for their laughs and their box office appeal upon obscenities.

This week, exactly one year after the Breen office began to function, a vast change is perceptible. The New York theaters at present are screening the following pictures: (1) "Love Me Forever," (2) "Doubting Thomas," (3) "Escape Me Never," (4) "Oil for the Lamps of China," (5) "Let 'Em Have It," (6) "The Glass Key," (7) "Becky Sharp," (8) "Ruggles of Red Gap," (9) "No More Ladies," (10) "Break of Hearts." But let the reader make his own test. Let him compare any ten films

now current in his own home town with the sort of stuff shown there during July, 1933, and during the twelve months preceding the setting up of the Breen office. Even allowing fully for honest difference of opinion, it is difficult to see how anybody, attempting to describe the extent of the improvement that has taken place under the industry's year-old self censorship, could use a milder term than "remarkable" or "amazing."

Yet early this month, when the Catholic Daughters wrote their resolution on the pictures, they were content with the statement that the films are now "definitely cleaner."

It seems to me that this is a shocking understatement. It gives no inkling of the real truth. It implies that the Daughters are disappointed. At best it confers a grudging and miserly praise upon producers who, with all their faults, merit a much more generous recognition. And I am sorry that no delegate to the convention leaped to her feet to protest that the sentence was ungracious and that it showed a remarkable lack of appreciation.

I hold no brief for Hollywood and I am fully aware of the fact that the producers accepted reform only as the result of enormous pressure. But somebody ought to insist that since their meeting with the Catholic Bishops in May, 1934, the producers have lived up to their promises with admirable fidelity. They have adopted a code written and approved by Church authorities. They have employed a conscientious and strict interpreter of that Code. They have during the past year acceded to his every order, and frequently, it should be remembered, at considerable financial cost. In short they have shown a splendid spirit of cooperation with the official leaders of the Legion of Decency. Hence it is embarrassing to find that the Catholic Daughters do not seem even ordinarily appreciative.

Furthermore, the first of the Daughters' two spokesmen—both of them highly intelligent women who have shown fine leadership in their organization—has unfortunately announced to the press that she is urging her sisters to a drive for a law against block-booking. And the second proposes a new crusade in which film stars, notorious for divorces and scandals, are to be blacklisted and driven from the screen.

Both ladies are, of course, as free to urge their personal opinions as anyone else. But surely it will be wiser if the Daughters refuse to engage in either movement.

Anti-block-booking laws, despite the furore that has been raised about them, are in themselves no remedy for objectionable screen fare. And anyway, the Legion's chairman and head, Archbishop McNicholas, has officially committed his organization against the very drive which the lady is advocating. Good members of the Legion of Decency will therefore not accept her invitation to "do everything possible for laws against block booking."

And the boycott of a picture on the sole ground that its star has moral failings? Great harm is doubtless done to youthful morals when the scandals of Hollywood are widely publicized and made to seem attractive. But for the past year the Hays office has been enforcing a rigid censorship over just that sort of thing and the glamorous sins of certain players have suffered an almost total loss of favorable publicity. Evidently the Daughters have failed to notice that also.

It is regrettable indeed that the people who entertain us, in common with those who feed, clothe, teach, and rule us, are subject to human frailty and temptation. Yet it ought to be clear that the morality of a film depends, not upon the private lives of its players, but upon its own conformity to an objective code.

I must confess right here that in uttering these complaints I am not merely trying to play fair. At the instant I am considering a much more practical idea. It really ought to be obvious that if unwary Catholics continue to

denounce the Hollywood people for code violations that they are actually not guilty of and for sins which have no real bearing upon the moral content of the films, the producers will soon come to be filled with disgust and will thereupon resign from further cooperation with the Legion. If after a year of unprecedented cleanliness in their product they are still to be cursed, threatened, and boycotted by Catholic organizations and speakers, why should they continue at all in the difficult pursuit of virtue? If they are damned when they are clean as roundly as they were damned when they were dirty, what— they might reasonably ask themselves—is the use of reformation? And why not return to a codeless, censorless regime in which dirt pays handsome returns?

Catholics should be warned that if ever the producers, nagged by the extreme and irrelevant demands of Legion enthusiasts, should reach this state of mind, decency will be dead for a decade. Indeed the present satisfactory control over the films will hardly ever be restored.

The Prime Minister of Australia

JOHN A. TOOMEY, S.J.

SOME forty-five years ago, down in far-off Tasmania a little nine-year-old boy left the Sisters' School to go to work. Last week as a giant ocean liner crept into New York from Europe, scores of newspaper men, photographers, representatives of the State Department, swarmed around the same boy now grown to man's estate. He was handed a letter from the President of the United States inviting himself and wife to visit the White House as guests of Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt. People began addressing him as: "Your Excellency." He demurred. Just "Mr. Prime Minister, please," he entreated. A flag-draped limousine awaited him on the pier. He and his wife stepped into the machine and were whisked away through the canyons of New York to the hotel from which a huge Australian flag fluttered in the breeze, telling the throngs passing up and down Fifth Avenue that the ruler of Australia was within. And he looked out for the first time upon the city of New York where Horatio Alger spun his tales of poor boys soaring to dizzy heights of success. If Horatio Alger were living, he probably would have called on Mr. Lyons and written a story around the poor Tasmanian youth, who, without influence or wealth or formal education, had climbed steadily to international fame and power.

Alger being unavailable, I went down. A New York policeman guarded the Lyons entourage. I got past him successfully, met one of the secretaries and was finally ushered into the presence of a rather well-built gentleman of medium height, with a thick mop of tousled gray hair, pleasing regular features, including a prominent nose and a mouth that lent an impression of granite firmness. Charming, unaffected simplicity, with a note of reserved dignity, were unmistakably evident. He walked toward me, with a slight limp, shook my hand cordially and

introduced me to his wife, a youthful-looking mother of twelve children. A few minutes' conversation sufficed to reveal the interesting fact that Mr. Lyons is not a loquacious individual, at least not during interviews.

I asked him about the recent unpleasantness in Scotland. Wishing to honor him, the city of Edinburgh invited him up from England to receive the freedom of the city. Lord Tweedsmuir (John Buchan), the newly-appointed Governor General of Canada, was to be similarly honored. A group of anti-Catholics in Edinburgh conceived the idea of staging a violent protest against any such honor being conferred upon the Catholic Mr. Lyons. In Usher Hall, Edinburgh, scarlet-robed magistrates, councilors, and a large audience applauded as the Lord Provost, Mr. Lyons, and Lord Tweedsmuir took their places on the stage; but outside the hall several thousand bigots were standing in the rain, giving vent to boos, cat calls and cries of "No Popery." The ceremony inside proceeded without interruption until the Lord Provost concluded his eulogy of the Australian Prime Minister, when an explosion of noisy protests arose from various parts of the house. The disturbers were ejected; the Lord Provost apologized for "the unseemly conduct of a few of our citizens"; Mr. Lyons spoke, ignoring the incident, and received a prolonged ovation.

He made light of the affair. "It was only a small section of the population," he said. "I appreciated deeply the action of the Council of Edinburgh and of the people of Edinburgh. I received a gratifying welcome in Glasgow, too. I also enjoyed my visit to Ireland very much and was quite touched with the reception tendered me by the Irish people."

Mr. Lyons, with his wife, left Australia for the first time in his life to journey to England as the representative

of the Commonwealth of Australia at the Silver Jubilee of King George and Queen Mary. They were guests of the King and Queen at Windsor Castle, and dined with Their Majesties, but would not say much about it. Discussing the King and Queen is one of those things, it appears, which are not done. "The King and Queen were very gracious. They are very much loved," was all the information the interviewer could obtain concerning Windsor Castle.

Joseph Aloysius Lyons was born in the year 1879, in Stanley, Tasmania, a village of about four-hundred population. His mother came from Kildare in Ireland; his father was born in Australia of Galway stock. He went to a little school conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph until he reached the ripe age of nine and one-half years when he plunged into the world of business, choosing the career of errand boy in a printing office. At twelve, he returned to school, continuing until he was fifteen, when he became a teacher in the state schools, attending, a little later, the Teachers' Training School.

During his life as a teacher, he became dissatisfied with the educational policies of the regime then in power and decided the only way he could rectify the situation was by entering politics. He was elected on the Labor party ticket for the district of Wilmot, and has been representing that same district for twenty-six years, first in the Tasmanian and then in the Federal Parliament. In Tasmania, he became Minister of Education, Treasurer, and Premier for five years. While Minister of Education, he married in 1915 a young school teacher, a Miss Burnell, of Cornish ancestry, whose mother was Australian born, and whose father hailed from Devonshire. She became a Catholic before the marriage, which has been blessed with twelve children, eleven of whom are still living.

In 1929, Mr. Lyons became a member of the Labor Federal Government, serving as Postmaster General in the Cabinet for eighteen months when he found himself disagreeing more and more with the policies of the Labor party in combating the economic crisis which had struck Australia and the world. The time came when he conceived it to be his duty to proclaim his opposition. Despite his lifelong affiliation with the Labor party, he broke with it, headed a new political group, the United Australian party, which swept the country in December, 1931. Joseph Lyons became Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, and in the four years that have since elapsed has had the gratification of seeing his policies vindicated by subsequent elections.

"I advocated a policy of reduced expenditure and increased taxation," Mr. Lyons said. "There was a tendency on the part of the Labor party to interfere with the management of the Commonwealth Bank. My policy and that of my party was to permit the Bank Board freedom from all political interference in the management of its affairs."

"Since I have been Premier," he continued, "one of my jobs was the cleaning up of the New South Wales situation. New South Wales had defaulted in the payment

of interest on its national debt. In Australia, if a State fails to pay, responsibility falls upon the Commonwealth. We had to compel them to repay us. Premier Lang ignored the legislation we passed and the Governor of New South Wales dismissed him. There was an election and the people of New South Wales endorsed the Commonwealth attitude."

I asked him about the dissatisfaction in West Australia. He put upon a stool the leg which had been injured in an automobile accident. "West Australia was moving for secession from the Commonwealth," he said. "It is an exporting country, and when world prices sank there was a definite problem. On my way to England I spoke to the people of West Australia and urged them to have my Cabinet visit them. My Cabinet went over and the Premier of West Australia welcomed them. West Australia has now nearly balanced its budget."

He adverted to the problem of the national debt. "We converted a big part of the national debt held in London and elsewhere to such an extent that it saved us £2,000,000 a year. Australia has earned her reputation of paying every penny she owes. Her bonds rank high throughout the world. In the light of performance, I think they should be higher here in New York than they are."

Concerning his daily program in Canberra, the capital of Australia, he said it was sufficiently strenuous. "In these days with all the problems cropping up there is little let-up for Ministers," he admitted. "But I have wonderful cooperation from all my colleagues. They help me appreciably and take much of the load off my shoulders. I have gone through stirring times, full of worries and anxieties, but I found it fascinating all the same, and as time goes on and it all becomes a part of history, it will be something to have played a part in such a critical period." Since Mr. Lyons assumed the Premiership in 1932, the national deficit has disappeared. This year there is a surplus; wage cuts and pensions have been restored; unemployment cut in half and public confidence, in large measure, restored.

Mrs. Lyons is as well known to the Australian public as is her illustrious husband. Her life is a cogent refutation of the favorite arguments advanced by birth-control advocates. She has brought twelve children into the world, and given herself whole-heartedly to the arduous cares of a mother and a wife. She has done the sewing; she has done the housework; she has neglected none of the thousand-and-one things required of a woman raising a large family; and yet has not found the multitudinous labors associated with home and children an obstacle to social and political interests. She is regarded today as one of the finest woman speakers in Australia. Side by side with her husband, she has addressed huge throngs in all parts of Australia. Ever since she married Mr. Lyons, at the age of eighteen, she has been interested in politics and once stood for Parliament in Tasmania. Her work in connection with child welfare and maternal welfare has been outstanding. Catholic societies, such as the Catholic Daughters of Australia, scattered throughout the land, know her as a frequent speaker on their programs, and

when she was leaving for England, the Catholic women of Melbourne manifested their esteem for her in a public presentation.

Addressing a group of 2,000 mothers in England during her recent visit, Mrs. Lyons said: "About thirty years ago the idea began to grow that a woman with a large family was a lunatic. Now she has come to be regarded as a criminal lunatic. People tell me: 'It's all very well to have a big family if you can support them.' They would be surprised if they knew what small means I had to bring up my family. I have known rather desperate times. . . . You mothers who find it hard to make ends meet—I believe the blessing of God is on you. You are the standard bearers of the world. Children of large families are often better trained spiritually and socially than children of small families."

Coming from a convert the following excerpt from her address to the Catholic Women's League in London is noteworthy: "I have shed tears more than once over the beauty that I have found in this old land. For instance, in Salisbury Cathedral where I was stirred to the depths of my spirit by its beauty and by the fact that Salisbury Cathedral was built in the days when this country was Catholic and everyone in it practised the Catholic Faith."

The eldest Lyons boy is now studying law at Tasmania University, having made his preparatory studies at a school conducted by the Christian Brothers. Another boy is a student with the Brothers; two girls attend a Presentation convent academy; three girls and two boys are in the convent school at Canberra. "I believe firmly in the necessity of Catholic education," Mrs. Lyons said to me. "Religion must be inculcated in early life. I do not know how anybody can bring up a family without religion."

"Here we are being interviewed when we should be eating dinner," Mr. Lyons commented, with a smile. "I think I'll have a bite brought up here. I want very little. Will you have a bite with me, Father?" I had just had a little soup, and declined. Mrs. Lyons decided she would go down to the restaurant. As she was leaving I told her I felt honored in having met the wife of the Prime Minister.

"That's not a compliment," she said, jokingly. "The Bishop of London said it was never a compliment to anyone to be introduced as the wife of somebody or other."

Mr. Lyons' bite appeared. He commenced pouring tea. His hand clutched a ham sandwich. "Yes," he said in answer to a question, "I used to enjoy playing cricket. Also tennis, and I did quite a bit of track work in my time, too."

"A report said that while crossing the Atlantic you ordered an Australian Minister to be sent to Washington."

"That's not true," he replied arranging some lettuce between slices of bread. "I have no such powers as that. I will look over the situation in Washington and take the matter up with my Cabinet."

"You are to stay at the White House?"

"Yes, and I am looking forward with pleasure to meeting President Roosevelt personally."

A very welcome cablegram came to Mr. and Mrs. Lyons in New York. It told them all the children were well and waiting anxiously for their papa and mamma to return. Mr. and Mrs. are eager to get back to Australia to see on the pier eleven young Lyons waving to them.

"Religion's All or Nothing"

A. LONGFELLOW FISKE

THESE characteristic, pungent lines from Robert Browning have remained with me for years:

Religion's all or nothing.

It's no mere smile o' contentment,

Sigh of aspiration, sir, like its likeness or its whiteness. . . .

It's life of life and self of self.

I tell you, men won't notice . . .

When they do, they'll understand.

Thus the poet, with the poet's insight, breaks through the clouds of sophistry that ever hang over religion as an entertaining subject for philosophic and parlor discussion, and lands his thought plane squarely on the earth of reality. He takes religion out of the nebulous clouds of speculation and makes it a thing as real as life itself. In fact, he insists that religion *is* life itself—that is, it is "all or nothing."

Browning broadcasts this conclusion about religion, that it is actually something of primal importance and fundamental to human happiness and social adjustment, as though it were more or less of a discovery of his own. He suddenly decides that religion is more than pretty sentiment or the avocation of the leisure class, and blatantly cries, "Hear ye, hear ye! Religion's more than a chess game for theologians, it is all or nothing, self of self and life of life." In other words, he would tell us that religion is a program of life, a rule of conduct, a light to guide our feet, a spiritual force to curb and sublimate the passions and primitive instincts, a code of principles to build society upon; the deepest and most vital truth to weave into the fabric of civilization, a sort of golden or scarlet thread to give the cloth semblance of pattern and design—yes, religion is all of this, and more, to the discerning mind of the poet; and incidentally we must confess that in this he was running true to the form of Edwin Markham's asseration that "the poet is the truest prophet for he sees the farthest."

But the more I have pondered Browning's arresting lines, the stronger has been the conviction in my mind that, after all, he was uttering a truth not new at all but recognized throughout the centuries by the Church and by every Pope who has written Encyclicals. As a statement it may have proved thought provoking and even condemnatory and disquieting to the dilettante mind, the sophist, the comfortable scholar who would examine religion about as the biologist does a bug or butterfly, and with little more emotion, who makes religion a matter of dialectics rather than of life, a philosophy and metaphysic rather than a program of living. He sees religion as a "system of thought" and never as man's spiritual

preparedness, the armor and sandals which equip him *cap a pie* for life's battles and toilsome onward march to eternity. He fails to discern that religion is nothing at all if not a truth or system of truths and principles to be *applied* and proven in the human arena of struggle and tragedy.

The Church has always recognized religion as "all or nothing." In the very first century it caught the spirit of its Lord and Master and its early converts dared the lion in the arena and huddled like hunted beasts in the under-caves of the earth, making the catacombs holy places where the light of the Blessed Sacrament shone in Divine glory upon the tombs of martyrs oftentimes improvised as the tabernacle of the Mass. Surely the Church was born in the conviction that "religion's all or nothing" and not a parlor philosophy or Sunday go-to-meeting custom.

Following down through the subsequent ages, the Church has continued to exemplify this conception of religion. A gallant Spanish soldier, wounded in battle, lying upon his bed of misery, reads the "Lives of the Saints," and suddenly sees the light as did St. Paul upon the road to Damascus, and being convinced that "religion's all or nothing" he throws off his soldier's uniform and sword and sallies forth into the world as a militant knight and apostle of Christ. Loyola, the soldier, becomes a captain of the Church and the Founder of one of its greatest Orders, and his example has been followed by thousands of others who have left all and followed Jesus, because they believed in His words and His mission, and that "religion's all or nothing."

We could call the role of the saints—St. Francis of Assisi and all the rest of them—and it would be the same glorious story, men and women forsaking father and mother, sister and brother, and the world, that they might give themselves completely to Christ.

To a convert Catholic, and especially to a convert Protestant minister, the history of the Church, the lives of her saints, and the existence of Religious Orders as well as the priesthood itself, make a tremendous appeal. Here he feels is reality. Here he sees complete obedience to Our Lord's command to "leave all and follow Him." Here is a Divine challenge to the indifferent and the worldly. Here is a solemn rebuke to those of us who make of our religion a mere side issue, something to play with, an avocation rather than a vocation. Here is a twentieth-century renaissance of first-century Christianity, a re-enactment of Christ's sacrifice and a consistent acceptance of His challenge to disciples.

Those outside its boundaries may criticize the Church, misunderstanding her because they never fully understood her Founder or knelt at His feet with Moses and Elias upon the mountain top of Transfiguration, but one thing never can be said of her, either of the Church of yesterday or today, and that is that she has been diletante, indifferent, or insincere. She is tremendously sincere and in earnest, and her organization as well as doctrine proves it. Corruption has crept in, but that can hardly be avoided since the Church is human as well as Divine. The heart of the Church has ever remained pure

and devoted to her Lord. A Father Jogues hacked to pieces and tortured by the Indians; a priest giving his life in a leper colony; and legions of priests and Sisters setting themselves apart in consecrated life service to humanity—greater proof hath no man than this, that the Church of today is the Church Christ founded and loved and to which He promised His presence forever, even to the "consummation of all things."

I think it was Gipsy Smith, the evangelist, who several years ago accused his Protestant brethren of taking the old hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers," a bit too literally. The hymn says,

Onward Christian soldiers,
Marching *as* to war.

That, said Smith, is exactly what too many Christians are guilty of, that is, they march "*as* to war," as though they were "tin soldiers," merely playing at their religion. There really isn't any war at all, and we are not actually Christian soldiers engaging in a hand-to-hand fight-to-the-death conflict with evil. We just don't take our religion seriously, we merely "play at it."

Here certainly is a rather bitter and ironic criticism of present-day Protestants. But it applies likewise to far too many Catholics. Perhaps unconsciously we say, "Let George do it," and point with pious sophistication to the saints and Religious, to the priests, and say, "They are set apart to practise religion; it is their vocation; while I go to Mass on Sunday—"

Catholic Christians marching "*as*" to war! Catholics who would practise their religion by a sort of vicarious atonement, expecting the Religious and the priests to do their "practising" for them! Of course this is wrong, not as it should be at all. Those "set apart" are examples for all Christians, and particularly Catholics, and their lives should constitute both an example and a challenge.

Which brings us back to the declaration by the poet that "religion's all or nothing." This statement of truth may have been spoken by a Protestant and perhaps as a bit of "protesting" against Protestant indifferentism, but it applies to the whole of Christendom and to all who accept the name Christian.

A legitimate part of the business of the Church is to prove to the materialist and the infidel, to those who think of religion as mere intellectual casuistry and a subject for parlor discussion and speculation, that they are wrong both in their premise and conclusion. The Church must prove to thinking men and women that religion is "all or nothing," that it is not a "mere sigh of aspiration," but is "life of life" and "self of self." It must take religion out of books and Bibles and sermons and somehow connect it with social and political action and thus build the Kingdom of God among men, but first of all Faith and the grace of God must exist in the individual heart. Religion, living in the soul and working out in action, assures both individual and social salvation.

Religion is not theory, not speculation, or vague theological abstractions; religion is God living in and through the Sacraments of His Church; it is Emmanuel, God with us.

A Soviet "Jewish Republic"

DAVID GOLDSTEIN

A JEWISH republic is in the making in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics that is to be minus Judaism. It has brought forth from the Rabbinate the query, "Can Judaism survive?" It is called Biro Bidjan, being located between the Biro and the Bidjan, two tributaries of the River Amur. Most enthusiastic claims are being made for the potential gold, oil, metallurgic, and agricultural possibilities of this Siberian territory which is twice the size of Palestine.

There are at present only fifty-odd thousand inhabitants in Biro Bidjan, of which two-thirds are Jews. The Socialist ambition is to attract millions; therefore it was placed in the budget of the *piatiletka*, the five-year plan. Great was the enthusiasm when, with the Red Army Band playing the "Biro Bidjan March," the delegates cheered at the Third Plenum of the Ozet (society to promote colonization in the U. S. S. R.), where they heard Biro Bidjan declared an autonomous Jewish district and promised the status of a Jewish republic as soon as the Jews within its borders number 50,000. The President of the U. S. S. R., M. J. Kalinin, in meeting the delegates and their friends who came to greet the Communist party and the Government for its decision, promised to the Jews a homeland minus Judaism. He said: "Personally I consider Biro Bidjan will become in about ten years the custodian of Jewish national culture, *Jewish in form, but Socialist in culture*" (italics mine, *Moscow News*, June 9, 1934).

While Jews are divided as to the advisability of furthering this new territorial settlement, the emphasis appears to be in its favor. The objections come mainly from orthodox Jews who worship God and love Zion (both repudiated by Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and Kalinin); from Zionists who hold that immigration into Biro Bidjan would deflect from the building of the homeland in Palestine; and from critics who say that it is a clever, far-sighted scheme to build a buffer state against any Japanese offensive that is likely to take place, for Biro Bidjan is on the Far Eastern border of the Socialist Soviet Republics, near Manchuria, through which runs the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

On the other hand, those favoring the project say that Biro Bidjan is needed today because only a fraction of the Jews can be accommodated in Palestine, and those there are ever confronted with the bitter opposition of the Arab population; that even those desiring to enter Zion were checked recently by British cancellation of immigration permits; and that at present an attempt is being made to deport thousands of Jews who are alleged to have entered Palestine illegally from Germany. The answer to the buffer-state argument is that the Red Army is ready and fitted to meet any attack, and that it will not let Japan massacre the Jews as the British allowed the Arabs in Palestine in 1929.

Naturally the Socialists, Communists, and the well-organized Hebrew trades of our country favor Biro Bidjan. Some of them are organized into a Jewish land-settlement society called "Icor" to encourage the population of the place. Others beside the proletariat are for the land that is to be "Jewish in form, but Socialist in culture." Lord Marley, Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords, and Felix Warburg, of the banking firm of Kuhn, Loeb, and Co., are the foremost among the philanthropic wealthy who stand back of the new-found homeland.

The call of the U. S. S. R. for Jews was voiced through the Jewish press of America by Pierre Van Paassen who said that there are no Magyars, no Cuzas, no Hitlers, no Grand Muftis, no Passfields or Churchills to limit their numbers and territory; no signs "Only Christians" in Biro Bidjan. Socialist Russia asks for Jews, welcomes Jews from all over the world, and offers a life for Jews. The project has a most ardent proponent in *Jewish Opinion*, a "journal of Jewish life," edited by James Waterman Wise (son of Rabbi Stephen Wise), whose recent visit to Soviet Russia has intensified his Communistic leanings. He holds that it is "the only place on earth where large Jewish immigration is permitted and feasible" for the 5,000,000 Jews of central and eastern Europe.

Under the caption, "Biro Bidjan for Settlement of Jews," the *Jewish Advocate* (Boston, March 13, 1934) says:

The Soviet Government itself is prepared to extend money subsidies to facilitate Jewish colonization. . . . With the British Government maintaining its vicious immigration restrictions as regards Palestine and with the United States adamant as regards the entry of German refugees, Russia is today the only country that holds out hope for salvage of Jewish lives. . . . Jews should begin to revise their attitude toward Russia. If the Fascists of the world insist on lumping Jews indiscriminately with Communists, at least Jews should derive some benefit from that association.

Here is a prologue of what is destined very likely to be a Jewish epilogue. Jews can enter the U. S. S. R. and "salvage their lives," but it must be at the price now being paid by the 3,000,000 "Jews" in the U. S. S. R.—their Judaism, as far as it is religious in content. They are welcome to come to Biro Bidjan with all the alien capital they can gather, but let them beware if they smuggle in their alien ideology. No pogroms will be issued against them as in the days of the Czars when persecution sent a million of them into the United States. But their religion is another matter. They are not guaranteed any immunity from the ridiculing, besmirching, and extinguishing of it that is now in progress in the Soviet Union.

Open anti-Semitism is taboo in the U. S. S. R.; whatever there is of it is kept under cover. Even to call a Jew *Zhid* ("sheeny") means punishment by fine or the loss of Communist party standing. Jews may move about

as freely as any other class of people; they may live in Moscow, something forbidden in the days of the Romanoffs. There are other heretofore unknown privileges granted them that arouse their pride in Soviet Russia. The colleges and universities are open to them in unlimited numbers, and they are permitted to guide the affairs of government by holding strategic positions of power. That is why the Soviet Ambassador was able to pacify some of the leading Jews of Illinois, when in answer to the charge of persecution in the U. S. S. R., he said that the rumor "is too crude an invention to deserve serious consideration." Surely it is only by narrowing his concept of liberty to Communist dimensions that the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in Washington could dismiss the charge of persecution with such contempt. If oppressive laws against the exercise of educational and religious rights were—as they rightly are—included in what is termed persecution, the dictatorship of the proletariat stands—like Mexico—guilty of the charge.

Jews may go to Biro Bidjan or any other part of the Soviet Union but they must not stand for Zionism while within its borders. Advocates of Zionism are subject to arrest as counter-revolutionaries because it is held to be a part of an English imperial design to build a buffer state at the Suez Canal to protect British interests in Egypt and India, and also because of its religious content.

Religion itself—Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan, or Buddhistic—is theoretically permitted in the U. S. S. R. (Biro Bidjan included) but woe to him who practises it and then seeks favors of the Soviets or membership in the Communist party. Religious liberty is so completely circumscribed in that benighted land that neither Judaism nor any other religion can survive.

The most effective, simple, religion-destroying enactment devised is in its Constitution, which was first proposed by the Socialist party of the United States. It declares that religion must not be taught to "children up to the age of eighteen years of age." It is the law that brought the death sentence to Msgr. Budkiewicz. So when President Kalinin says that Biro Bidjan will be "Jewish in form, but Socialist in culture," he means that Judaism as a religion is to be smothered; that there, as in other parts of the U. S. S. R., the children will be herded in nurseries and schools decorated with posters declaring: "Religion is a poison. Keep it away from us." Rabbi Simon Glazer, president of the Central Council of Greater New York Rabbis, reported having seen children kept in rooms containing scrolls of the Orthodox Jewish faith and crucifixes of the Russian Orthodox Church where they were told to pray if they became hungry. No food coming to them, they were taken where servants brought in the food they asked for. Thus they were taught that Sovietism and not religion grants their desires. Philip S. Bernstein says in the *B'nai B'rith Magazine* that the atheistic teachings of Russia have set thousands of children against their parents, that they no longer think of themselves as Jews, for their "birth of Jewish parents seems no more significant to them than if they were born of parents whose eyes were blue."

Teaching of religion, but not irreligion, is prohibited. In the Yevseksiya, the Jewish section of the Communist party, are rallied the most ruthless anti-Judaic group that ever was brought together from among the sons of Jacob. A reflection of its bitter anti-religious character has been seen in our country when similar groups have carried on an offensive campaign outside of synagogues on the two leading Jewish holidays, New Year Day and the Day of Atonement. The youth cry out, "We are proletarians, not Jews!"; "No gefillte fish for me, ham tastes better"; marrying Jews does not occur to them.

As for the parents of this new generation of "Jews," they cannot practise their orthodox religion for many reasons. No kosher (ceremonially clean) meal can be bought in any Russian cities. If they desire to open a synagogue they will find the governmental charges almost prohibitive. Keeping the Sabbath Day holy is made impossible for them in the land of Socialism applied, for under their present working system some rest days are Mondays, some Tuesdays, and so on. To call this persecution may be "a crude invention not worthy of serious consideration," in the view of the Soviet Ambassador, but in the view of Philip S. Bernstein it "has been the destruction of the religion of Judaism in Russia. We shall see for the first time in the history of our people a community of 3,000,000 Jews living without Judaism."

Russian Jews are said to have never been at heart Russians while 6,000,000 of them were herded in the Ghetto. Today, through the application of the teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lasalle (Hebrews), they are no longer Jews, but atheists. Judaism is confronted with a dilemma. Will it survive? Not by going to Palestine, for there Jews will find the Hebrew sections of it in the hands of Socialistic, anti-orthodox "Jews." Not in Biro Bidjan, for there he will have to accept a "Socialist culture" which is basically irreligious. A perusal of the courageous sermons by Cardinal Faulhaber in his "Judaism, Christianity, and Germany" shows that the only direction in which they can go where they will find the eternal principles embodied in the Old Jewish Testament kept alive in their fulness is in the Church of the Son of David.

ONSET

As one who has been overthrown,
I praise the trumpet pealing
To fresh onset of battle.
Let the victor take time for healing—
The loser springs to the rattle
Anew of gunstock and metal.
As one who has been overthrown
And has no hope of winning,
I find my mind grow steady
Amid ranks failing and thinning
Where the dying man's cheer is heady
And the living man's wound gapes ruddy.
As one who has been overthrown,
I run toward fresh disaster
Refusing to be defeated.
Where the struggle is fiercer, faster,
Be the ultimate measure meted
And the ultimate vulture sated.

MUNA LEE.

Sociology

The Future Looks Backward

BENJAMIN L. MASSE, S.J.

FINALLY I would say that never before has history presented such a spectacle of universal stupidity, confusion, and contradiction. The historian can attempt only to chronicle the more amazing facts; to explain them is impossible. Perhaps fifty years is too short a period for a proper perspective, but from the evidence available in this year of Our Lord, 1985, we may reasonably doubt whether the passage of another half-century will aid much in unraveling so many complex and contradictory facts.

In general, the capacity to produce continued to increase after the World War. By 1929, the factories of Europe and America were able to supply an unlimited quantity of goods. Despite occasional droughts and other natural handicaps, agriculture reached a point where it could easily satisfy all the necessities of the teeming millions on the face of the earth. Never before had such a condition existed. Theoretically, the millenium had arrived, and the human race, in its quest for perfection, seemed about to enjoy, after hundreds of years of bitter striving and suffering, the seven years of plenty.

Nothing of the sort happened. Toward the end of 1929, the United States, richest and most advanced materially of all the nations, found herself pinched in the vise of the most serious economic depression in her history. By the middle of the next year, conservative estimates set the number of unemployed at 10,000,000; while in the agricultural districts thousands of farmers, unable to meet their obligations, stood hopelessly by as their farms were sold to satisfy creditors. The problem of relief became the chief governmental affair, and an army of workers were recruited to dispense aid to millions in distress.

Gradually within the next three years, this condition became practically world-wide. Tariff walls were built higher, international trade fell off, and the world subsided hopelessly into a state of almost complete stagnation. Meanwhile, and this is the amazing fact to remember, the industrial and agricultural markets were glutted with materials. While people went hungry in the streets, farmers fed wheat to cattle and left corn rotting in the fields.

The cause of this state of affairs must, one would think, have been evident. Under a system of capitalism, the wealthy class found itself unrestricted in its pursuit of more wealth. By paying the laborer a wage that barely sufficed for daily necessities (in many cases it did not suffice for these) the industrialists and the bankers who furnished the capital accumulated ever greater and greater profits, until the time was at hand when the distribution of purchasing power became so inadequate that the great majority were unable to buy enough goods to keep the machines in operation. The capitalist closed his factory,

since there was no longer a demand for his goods, and went on a vacation.

Some, it would seem, finally realized that the situation would not solve itself. On the supposition that the purchasing power of the masses must be augmented if industry was to resume operations, this minority advocated higher wages and shorter hours of work, with a consequent lowering of profits for industrialist and banker. With exceptions here and there, the industrialists and bankers, hopelessly wedded to the economics of *laissez faire*, refused to consider a change. Thus, in the light of future events, the decision becomes one of the most stupid and selfish in history. The fact that the wealthy made generous contributions to churches, schools, libraries, and other institutions scarcely minimizes their guilt, and it does accentuate the innate contradiction of the times.

In the social field, an equally amazing condition existed. The war of 1914-18 had been fought to end war. Certainly, after four years of brutal slaughter, the people of the world longed for a lasting peace. This longing was realized in countless ways, chief of which was the child of the world's best statesmanship, the League of Nations. Although the moral force of the League was tremendous, back of it was, by the voice of an aroused world's citizenry, the same idiotic diplomacy, the same fears and hatreds, the same stupid preparations which had culminated in the holocaust of 1914 continued unabated. By the end of 1933, it was apparent that, despite the opposition of peoples everywhere, another Armageddon was near. In short, the world seemed to be longing for peace and at the same time preparing for war.

Meanwhile, the European situation had been extremely complicated by the advent of Communism in Russia. Working persistently and fanatically, with an enslaved population as tools, the Bolsheviks had gradually moulded in the land of the Tsars a government vowed to the destruction of Western civilization. Although it was the hated enemy of capitalism, the capitalists of America and Europe helped its growth; although it scorned the art of Europe, artists and writers supported it; although it denied the existence of God and swore to annihilate Christianity, Christian countries, for the sake of profits, had intercourse with it and paid indirectly for its campaign of diabolical propaganda. In the autumn of 1934, the crowning absurdity was perpetrated. The Christian nations of Europe, with France, once the eldest daughter of the Church, leading the way, invited the atheistic Communist Government of Russia to join the League of Nations. To this betrayal of the culture of the West but a few dissenting voices were raised; and a government, committed to the annihilation of Western civilization, took its honored place among the nations of that culture. The

fact that the press of the world, almost unanimously, called the action a generous gesture toward peace indicates the incredible inconsistency and ignorance of the times. Expediency, not truth, everywhere ruled, and expediency was in every instance a chimera.

The domestic scene was equally perplexing and incomprehensible. The old ideals of liberty and democracy which had been the joint gift of Greece and Christianity to European culture survived in most countries only in their emasculated nineteenth-century form. The line between Oriental despotism and Western freedom nearly disappeared, and was saved from lasting obliteration only by the unwillingness of the Christian spirit to die. The meekness with which peoples submitted to the deadly regimentation of new governments would, I am sure, have been incomprehensible to an Aquinas or a Thomas More. It is incomprehensible to us.

If the dictators had assumed power in order to lead European civilization back to its true principles, the people could have submitted intelligently to a temporary abrogation of their liberties. Something like this happened in Austria; but for the most part the totalitarian state was frankly pagan in its ideals and methods, although, urged on by expediency, it did make temporary concessions to the old order. There was never any doubt, however, at least in the minds of the dictators, that the state was the important thing to which everything else was necessarily subordinated. The worship of physical force as personified in the state led to an exaggerated nationalism which in the long run was bound to be inimical to the best interests of the state. The result, furthermore, of this intensification of the nationalist spirit was a tremendous paradox. At a time when the nations were drawn more closely together than ever before, when the need for international friendship was most apparent, and the benefits of co-operation most obvious, nationalism accentuated existing differences and made a world society impossible. It would seem that the result of propinquity was, inconsistently enough, enmity.

The period was, as a consequence, an age of panaceas. With so many difficulties confronting men, it was natural that there would be a multitude of prophets pointing the way to peace and safety. There was a multitude, to be sure, and soap boxes groaned under oratorical gyrations wherever a soap box was to be found. But it was a question of the blind leading the blind. The solutions were frequently more revolting than the condition to be bettered, and it is difficult not to conclude that a state of universal insanity existed.

Perhaps this is the key to the period treated in this book. The thesis of insanity would explain most of the facts perfectly, but I hesitate to advance it, since this interpretation is more the business of the psychologist than of the historian. Furthermore, I am unaware of a similar case of universal imbecility; although I am unaware also of the existence of a similar state of affairs. At any rate, when one remembers the fads and fancies of the times, birth control, legalized concubinage, nudism, eroticism in art and letters, comic strips, Dean Inge,

tabloids, municipal politicians, school boards, educational theory and practice, Communism, Hyde Park, the French Chamber of Deputies, Croce, Mexican Presidents, Mrs. Sanger, Liberalism, Hollywood Comedies, Henry L. Mencken and H. G. Wells, it is easy to realize what a rich field awaits the investigation of a specialist trained in abnormal psychology.

So much, then, for the scope of my book. It remains to be said that the Catholic Church persisted in existing and continually pointed out the Divine path that leads to Truth—but the rest of the world thought she was fooling.

Education

The Four-o'Clock Teacher

JOHN C. RATH

MORE than 2,000,000 Catholic children are growing up without a Catholic education. We cannot expect them to be much more than nominal Catholics. Too many of them get no religious instruction but an occasional Sunday-morning lesson, which they take wryly as bitter medicine and which they shirk at every opportunity. They need more and better-organized instruction than the makeshift Sunday-morning catechizing. The ordinary means of the Mass and the Sacraments, the parish school or at least Sunday school, cannot produce the desired effect, because most of these children seldom attend Mass or Sunday school. A special means is required to come in contact with them. This means of contact is provided by the four-o'clock teacher.

Who may qualify for this important position? In the first place, Sisters in parish schools, or Catholic teachers in public schools; then college or high-school students; all under the direction of parish priests.

Every instructor has individual problems to solve, but there are few who meet with such problems as confront the four-o'clock teacher. This class of religious instruction is an addition to the workaday world of both teacher and pupil. The body must labor overtime; nerves are strained. The teacher arrives at the school or teaching center sometime before four o'clock in the afternoon, feeling much like a soldier at the front when the "zero hour" is near.

Soon the pupils arrive from the public school. There is the noise of roller skates on the sidewalk, the sound of running feet, the laughter of children at play. They come in happy, carefree groups. Girls have their jumping ropes; boys have their marbles. All are out for some fresh air and recreation after spending a day in the classroom; and they're getting all the fun they can before going into another classroom and listening to another teacher.

The bell rings at four, just as it did at nine in the morning. The four-o'clock pupils enter the building and try to settle down to the business of learning something from the four-o'clock teacher. The lesson is new to them—something about the Kingdom of Heaven, the goodness of God, or the truths of His Church. They want to learn all these things; this longing must be satisfied.

Things begin to happen. Like Hamlet's ghost, difficulties arise to haunt the teacher. Irrelevant questions are asked by some very annoying children. "Robert, keep those marbles in your pocket; this is no place to play. . . . I don't know how many hits Lou Gehrig made yesterday. . . . Be quiet. . . . Yes, I read about the big fight. . . . I didn't see that fire at the hotel. . . . Pay attention, Paul!"

Pity the four-o'clock teacher! Mistakes are made; children are sometimes treated roughly and answered sharply. The catechism has to be presented as a memory task as well as a map of life. Occasionally, facts are taught without an explanation of their meaning. Sometimes a discussion is permitted, and it is an excellent means of making the lesson's value apparent to the child's mind, not only for the present, but for the future as well.

The four-o'clock teacher must be a strategist, ready to turn the most irrelevant question into a pointed remark, and the most annoying child into one who is both interesting and interested. The prompt seizure of every opportunity heightens interest and does away with all need to call for quiet or attention. Classroom incidents can very easily furnish occasions for stories about our Lord or His Saints. The four-o'clock teacher must know how to tell these tales; how to make the action real, and the characters colorful. Unless the story is enlivened by effort of mind and heart and soul, it will remain comatose, without that verve and life which is necessary to make an impression on the child, to inflame his heart or to move his will.

"One picture is worth ten thousand words." The Chinese sage who gave us this proverb knew the value of coordinating the senses to produce a lasting impression. Pictures must be painted, and any reproduction, even a rough sketch on the blackboard, is an aid to word painting. Stories should be illustrated, if possible, by the use of a projection machine. The child is often tempted to see the latest feature at the neighborhood theater instead of returning to a schoolroom at four o'clock. Any room can be made into a little theater where pictures of the God Man and the heroes of His Church are featured every day, where children can look into the weary eyes of Christ on Calvary, and see His attitude toward sin.

All of us know that the child is an imitator. What he sees he believes, and what he approves he imitates. If the theater features a Western, he goes home a cowboy. If a gangster is made a hero, he goes home an outlaw. If the hero is a wise-cracking fool, he goes home a Smart Aleck. But if the schoolroom-theater features heroes in the spiritual life, he will go home an inspired follower of Christ, praying for help to be manly and saintly.

Above all, the prayers said before and after every class should be pleas for that supernatural help without which the most capable of teachers cannot succeed. With the help of God, four-o'clock teachers can bring the children of our back alleys to a knowledge of His goodness and a love of His truth. With His grace, they can teach boys and girls how to be Catholics in thought and word and deed—loyal citizens of our earthly cities and worthy citizens of God's own City beyond the sky.

It is inspiring to watch these teachers spend themselves for the good of the children, after the strain of their day's work. There is real Catholic Action: "a participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy"—an active share in the work of sanctification and salvation. Thousands of little ones are prepared for the reception of the Sacraments, and are taught how to live as practical Catholics. While the efficacy of the work varies in different centers, we find that the best results are achieved when an observant priest is present to be an instructor himself and to direct the efforts of his assistants.

We realize that such a course of religious instruction is not and cannot be a substitute for the parish school. It is merely an attempt to check the flood waters of irreligion fostered by a public-school system that looks only to the child's mind and body, and forgets the all-important soul. We have resources, in teachers and methods, which are available for our use in finding an alternative for the Catholic school, and we are in duty bound to assay these resources before we dismiss these inoffensive charges as beyond rescue or improvement. To what extent are we making use of what we have? In a few months, these children will again be with us.

With Scrip and Staff

I NEVER saw a cahow bird, and hope I never see one, for cahows were described by William Strachey, when he visited Bermuda in 1610, as "very silly," so tame that they would light upon the shoulders of the older settlers. Though they once flocked in millions upon Bermuda's shores, they became extinct about 1630. Now Dr. William Beebe announces that he has found the second specimen of a cahow, which is also called a pterodroma, seen in 300 years. The bird was dead when found, so that it could give no account of itself to Dr. Beebe.

It is about time, I should imagine, for extinction to overtake some of the birds that flit about and light upon the shoulders of our popular sociologists. A few more punches from a world reawakening to the realities of life, especially family life, and they will join the ghosts of the cahows.

The notion that women are ennobled, liberated, elevated by the destruction of the family bond and unlimited license to frustrate the prime purposes of marriage is not peculiar to Bermuda. Though the legislature of that motorless isle saw some terrific rumpuses of late over the legalization of birth-control propaganda, sterilization, and such matters, it has shown no inclination to let the cahows dictate its policies. But the notion above-mentioned does flutter about in the pages of such a supposedly modern work as the just completed "Encyclopedia of Social Sciences." It is pterodramatic.

THIS encyclopedia's article on "Woman, Position in Society," takes the attitude that Christianity not only conferred no benefit on woman, but worked positive harm.

As Christianity became dominant throughout Europe, women were deprived of that freedom which they had attained in Rome and had enjoyed to some degree under Anglo-Saxon law. Except (*sic*) for the fact that the Church extended the doctrine of free courtship and consent in marriage, women and especially wives occupied a position of abject dependence.

What was the "freedom" that women "had attained in Rome"? The outstanding characteristic of that freedom, glorified by these apologists of paganism, was the unlimited freedom of divorce.

Although new restrictions arose during the empire, such as the limitation on a woman's right to become surety, the Roman matron of this period was more independent legally and had more freedom socially than did a wife in any later civilization until very recent times.

The Roman "matron"! Well, from the bourgeois point of view, she alone counts. So we can forget the millions and millions of slave women who, in the ancient world, as hopeless drudges or toys of their masters or of the "free" matrons, knew none of these precious liberties.

The early Christian Church, of course, was completely in error when it had its doubts as to the glories of such freedom even for the matrons.

The vigorous denunciations of the freedom of the Roman women by the early Christian Church Fathers were an outgrowth of the attitude of the latter towards sex, which in many instances was undoubtedly pathological. The ascetic ideal of Christianity according to which sexual activity was carnal and *marriage was a concession to the flesh* resulted in the regarding of woman as the chief vehicle of sin. . . . (*italics mine*)

Yet we read further down, relative to the Middle Ages:

The wife became completely subject to her husband's authority, deprived of legal rights and independent existence; *as marriage was held to be a Sacrament*, she could have no recourse to divorce.

So the early Church was blind to the glories of multiple matrons' divorces, and to the beauties of the profligacy that these entailed, *because* the Fathers had no use for marriage (entirely at odds with what the Fathers *did* say about the dignity and beauty of marriage). Then, logic having changed with the fall of the Roman Empire, divorce was in medieval disesteem, because marriage was regarded as a sacred and holy thing, established by the Founder of Christianity as a symbol of the union of Christ and His Church. Woman was enslaved because marriage was made light of, was enslaved because marriage was exalted. I find it difficult to follow that reasoning, and look for a cahow bird on my shoulder.

Again, where is the supposed freedom that comes with divorce? From the writings of these supposed champions of women's freedom you would never gather that it takes two to make a divorce, and that the indissolubility of marriage protects the woman against the man quite as much as it hinders the woman from following her own whim in abandoning home and children. Prof. Charles Sarolea, in *G. K.'s Weekly*, for June 27, recounts the story of the quondam Scotch Presbyterian, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, intellectual parent of Nazism, who, after his little German wife had nursed him back to health after twenty-eight years of happy marriage, requested her to accept a divorce from him, so that he could "express himself." Being a *deutsche Hausfrau* and meek, she complied with her callously egotistical lord and master, and

obtained the divorce while he was left free to denounce in paroxysms of bitterness the Christian teaching that would hold a man down to his plighted word and spouse.

Sharp realities are forcing even the Bolsheviks to see these things a little more clearly than the misty-minded professors. On July 4 of this year, the Soviet authorities voiced alarm over the rapid increase in the number of divorces under their lax system. In 1934, thirty-seven per cent of the Moscow marriages resulted in divorces; in May, 1935, it had risen to forty-four per cent, and was still going up. Divorces, according to the Moscow press, are "most common among petty officials, office workers, and the like, who presumably have a bourgeois psychology." The Muscovites have spoken truer than they know. The notion that divorce is the touchstone of freedom is indeed a "bourgeois psychology," the inheritance from years in the Anglo-Saxon countries of subjection of women to industrialism and its peculiar religious philosophy. Woman's freedom is to be found not as a mere helpless home drudge, nor as an equally helpless economic competitor with man, but in the rich, varied, and functional existence that is guaranteed to her whenever the Christian ideal can have its play. And, despite what the Nazis may think, you will find that noble and liberal conception of woman's destiny in the modern world splendidly portrayed in the article *die Frau* in the new German Catholic encyclopedia, "Der Grosse Herder."

THE PILGRIM.

Literature

The Season's Best Plays

ELIZABETH JORDAN, D. LITT.

THE season's best plays are not necessarily those that have lingered longest in the theatre's lap. They never are, at any season. Indeed, there are occasional lingerers whose lingering is very hard to understand. But on the whole the average play's length or shortness of life is pretty good evidence of the public's liking or dislike of it. So I am swallowing several of the survivors, notably "Accent on Youth," which has only recently left us for a short vacation. I am even admitting that there must be more to that particular play than I suspected when I saw it, though I make the confession with what is called a "wry smile."

"Fly Away Home," which has also survived up till now and is taking a brief breathing spell, struck me as merely a bright little comedy with nothing in it to make a saga about. On the other hand, and despite its questionable theme, "The Children's Hour," still with us and going strong, has won its success by fine craftsmanship in writing and by superb acting and direction. It is easy to understand why the Pulitzer Prize was not awarded to it, and even easier to understand why every seat in the theater is filled at every performance. But the most striking feature of the past season is its large number of *clean* plays which were also very successful.

My own choice, as the best play of the season, is "The

First Legion." I acclaimed this play so warmly after its opening that my friends studied me anxiously for days, disturbed by such rare enthusiasm. But I still maintain, with my hand upon my heart, that "The First Legion" was the most beautiful play of the year. It lingered in New York for several months and has been successful on the road; but it should have run here a year, at least, and every Catholic should have given it whole-hearted support. It will be a weary time before we are again offered a play at once so Catholic, so dramatic, and so inspirational.

Second on my list of best plays I put "Noah," a French offering by André Obey. Next to "The First Legion" it was, in my opinion, the most perfect dramatic offering of the season. I am slow to believe that anything is "too good" for the American public. I find our public on the whole an excellent judge of plays. But it is just possible that both "The First Legion" and "Noah" were a bit over the average head. I can think of no other reason why they are gone and "The Children's Hour" is still with us.

Nevertheless, because of its magnificent reserve and its brilliant acting, and without consideration of its theme, I put "The Children's Hour" third on my list of this season's best plays. After that, choice becomes a matter of individual opinion—one theater lover's guess is as good as another's.

I select "The Old Maid" as the fourth among the season's ten best plays, though I object strongly to its choice as recipient of the Pulitzer award. My objection is ethical. Mr. Pulitzer stated clearly in his bequest that the award was to be made to "the best *original* play" of the year. This surely means that the playwright who receives the award has given the public a play in which the plot, situations, and dialogue, are his own. Miss Zoe Akins, winner of the '35 Pulitzer prize, has done nothing of the sort. She has simply lifted a play, lock, stock, and barrel, from the pages of Edith Wharton's novel. That she had secured the right to do this is understood, of course; that she did the job with great care and skill and with unusual adherence to the text and atmosphere of the novel, is granted. But that, having done this, she is entitled to a prize for an *original* play, I deny; and I cannot follow the mental processes of a committee which awards such a prize under such conditions. If I had been in Miss Akins' shoes when the award was made I should have backed away from it with my finger in my mouth and indicated to the confused gentlemen of the committee the towering figure of Mrs. Wharton in the foreground. All of which being so, I admit that, due first to Edith Wharton, second to Zoe Akins, and third to the cerebral acting of Judith Anderson and Helen Menken, "The Old Maid" is a fine play; and I cheerfully put it fourth on my list.

That, I think, brings us to "Awake and Sing." I am by no means in accord with all young Mr. Odets' premises and conclusions in this drama, but they are honestly conceived, well put, and absorbingly interesting. At present his literary pot boils up and overflows a bit at times,

because he is so young; but there is something very stimulating to the spectators in that boiling and overflowing. When he is a little older, and a little wiser, he will work more calmly and in one way more impressively. He will go far. Quite possibly he will tower above all his contemporary playwrights. That will be some years hence. As we watch him then we will nod contentedly and say "I predicted this." But I at least shall miss that early boiling and bubbling of the literary pot which comes only when youthful genius, outraged and passionate, furnishes the flame.

And yet, on second thoughts, why should Mr. Odets be so outraged? He is a young Jew. No doubt he has worked like a slave all his life, straining toward his goal with the zeal, tenacity, and ability of his race. Already, in his twenties, his country has recognized him, applauded him, given him his accolade. He had three plays on Broadway last winter, all of them successes. A country which gives that quick recognition, that big award, to a young lad up from the streets, can't really be as hopeless a country as Mr. Odets would have us believe. I commend the thought to him, after listing "Awake and Sing" as the fifth on my list of our ten best plays.

I am entering "Kind Lady," with Grace George, as the sixth best play. It, too, is having a brief breathing spell while Miss George rests through the summer's worst heat. I can't imagine "Kind Lady" without her. Evidently the producers couldn't either, for they made no effort to keep their big hit running in her absence. Her acting throughout the melodrama is as record breaking as the play; but to my mind the peak of her work is reached in those moments when, without word or gesture, she waits for rescue; and in that tense waiting sends a chill down the spine of every spectator.

It is a good season for the Georges. In "Personal Appearance," the seventh play on my list, it is Gladys George who refreshes her audiences with the best comedy of the season. This is distinctly a matter of *her* comedy, and not the play's; for the play, notwithstanding its clever lines, is no epoch-making achievement, save in its length of run. But the play and Gladys George offer us the best fun of the year. We all realize that the average moving-picture star, away from her silver screen and following such private life as she is permitted to live, must be a highly amusing person to watch. How amusing she can be it has remained for Gladys George to show us. She is, in every look, gesture and word, the beautiful waitress who rose to picture fame and fortune in a few months and who inevitably lost her lovely head in the process. Picture people don't like the play. To the rest of us, carefree and happy and far from Hollywood, "Personal Appearance" is a Roman holiday.

As the eighth best play I think I will nominate "Labyrinth Grove." Like "Personal Appearance" this delightful comedy depends for its appeal on the amazingly good acting of its star, who is Edmund Gwenn. It is in itself nothing to shout over. With Mr. Gwenn and his aid, Melville Cooper, it became one of the most pleasantly hilarious attractions on our stage. Merely to look at Mr.

Cooper in his Turkish slippers was enough excitement for me for one evening; and the feeling seemed to be general.

Another big success, "Escape Me Never," owed its vogue even more completely to its star. Nothing will persuade me to mention it in this list of the best, however, save as the unworthy vehicle in which a really great artiste, Elizabeth Bergner, rode to her American triumphs. She could have carried anything—and she did. Incidentally she saved the Theater Guild's season from complete financial disaster save in the proceeds of its two successful road companies, "Elizabeth the Queen" and "Ah Wilderness."

Neither will I mention "The Petrified Forest," whose only virtue, from my viewpoint, was that it starred Leslie Howard. Any play which does that can succeed, for Mr. Howard is one of the very few "play-proof actors" living today. If any play could have downed him "The Petrified Forest" would have done it. It is mentioned here only because it was one of the season's biggest box-office successes.

I found Noel Coward's "Conversation Piece" as charming as I found his "Point Valaine" revolting. Neither remained with us long, and the prompt departure of the latter offering was another proof of the public's basic good judgment. The failure of "Conversation Piece," was, I think, due to the amount of French it contained, which was unintelligible to the audience. To me Mademoiselle Printemps' French was beautifully clear, but I was lost when she spoke English, and so were most of the other spectators. To those who understood neither her French nor her English "Conversation Piece," a gay trifle, must have meant a dreary evening.

The ninth best play thrusts itself into the foreground at this point. It was "The Distaff Side," in which Dame Sybil Thorndyke gave us so moving and so beautiful a performance. There were bits in this play I did not admire, but taken as a whole it was a fine workmanlike social comedy, well written, and acted to perfection by its cast.

For the tenth place, and please remember that I am considering only the New York plays of the past winter, I submit E. M. Delafield's "To See Ourselves." It was very British, very quiet, very, very, re-fined, and very good entertainment. It was supposed to be pure comedy, but it had an element of tragedy in it which neither the British author nor her British company suspected. It showed American women how appalling life could be with a certain type of British husband. As propaganda it should effectually prevent any future marital hands meeting across the sea. But Mrs. Delafield evidently regarded her British spouse with the superb philosophy of the British wife, for she presented him as wholly normal. American women in the audience took him stolidly, soothed by the thought that he was 3,000 miles away, and that their American husbands were by their sides. But he is the saddest affair on our stage this season, and the most eloquent warning. For that reason, even aside from its smart lines and perfect acting, the comedy deserves the tribute of a place on my list.

The selection completes the list. A few more plays press forward for attention. The most pressing of these is another of Mr. Odets' offerings "Waiting for Lefty." There are those who would give a vote to "Fly Away Home." A few would shout for "Ceiling Zero," because of its one great breath-taking scene. It might be over-generous to give two votes to one man, when there are so many other plays and playwrights. Moreover, "Waiting for Lefty" is only a one-act play. Just the same, it is worth a dozen average Broadway successes. It is about taxicab drivers. They happen to be among my favorite heroes, and I've talked to them for countless hours during traffic jams. If this list could contain eleven best plays I'd make "Waiting for Lefty" the eleventh. We'll let it go at that.

A Review of Current Books

Harsh Beauty

THE FURYS. By James Hanley. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50. Published July 16.

THIS story of an Irish Catholic family living in an English seaport slum is not addressed to the gentle reader. *The Furys* is depressing not only because it contains the usual seductions or the sometimes profane and frequently vulgar language of the lower class, but chiefly because it is a painfully true picture of urban poverty. Stark in the best and the worst sense of the term, the book records the history of a family writhing in the chains of low wages, ignorance, and disappointment, so coarsened by life that their very prayers seem to be abusive.

Nevertheless, a harsh beauty seems to rise out of the murk of Hatfields and the crowded kitchen of the Furys. Old grandfather Mangan, the paralytic, propped in his corner and blinking his little eyes as he remembers the past; Maureen, who sought to escape the drudgery of her parents' house through marriage; Desmond, who broke his mother's heart when he married out of chapel; and Peter, the youngest, Peter, whose sly lechery ruined a career to which the whole family had sacrificed themselves—all of them only serve to intensify the noble humanity of the mother and the querulous loyalty of her husband. There is muck aplenty. Desmond is loathesomely coarse; Peter develops an unholy passion for his brother's unfaithful wife; Aunt Bridget never misses Mass nor the opportunity to spread a scandal; but the thing one remembers is not the horror of sin or of human stupidity, or the malignant fate that seems to pursue the poor, but the magnificence of the woman who never ceased to work, to hope and to pray for a future which none of her family deserved.

Mrs. Fury is no plaster saint. Indeed she is hardly a saint at all, so mixed are her motives. Intemperate outbursts of anger mar her holiest ambitions and her most sublime sacrifices. Human pride defeats her and she can accept all crosses save the most frequent one, ingratitude. Her sweetness pours forth only when like a crushed flower she is too exhausted to do more than open her arms to her blundering husband. Hatfields was too strong for her to break, her will too imperious for resignation. In her last great defeat when she finds out that Peter, her special son, had betrayed her again, it is her humanity which causes her desperate rage.

The setting of the story is the recent general strike in England and many of the details are deftly woven into the social background. Unobtrusively, too, the Church touches the life of the characters. Written for the most part in interior monologue *The Furys* is a masterly piece of realism which is bound to offend

many on account of the nature of the revelations. Hanley is, however, so scrupulously fair in his treatment of good and bad alike, so just in his portrayal of life's motley of virtue and vice that one must hesitate before committing him to the flames. Somehow or other, there is the sense of humanity, wounded and baffled, struggling on towards an indefinable peace and dignity. Even the agonies of the mother are the result not of desolation but of unwarranted anticipation. She had lived in the future when Peter would be a priest so that she missed the real joys of the present. Only when she is stripped of her illusions does she recognize the compensations in the devotion of Dennie, her husband, and the kindness of the son-in-law whom she had despised. In its own genre of psychological realism this novel takes a high place. Some of the characters are vile, but humanity is never unregenerate; several of the scenes are worse than bawdy, but the book as a whole is almost scientific in its detachment. *The Furies* is powerful but depressing and from the standpoint of craftsmanship amazingly competent. FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

Fire-Side Talk on Jesuits

AMERICAN JESUITS. By Dr. James J. Walsh. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

PROPORTIONATE to their numbers, no body of people have been written about more than the Jesuits. In 1864, Carayon counted 4,370 titles of works either blessing or damning them. Dr. Walsh thinks that today the number might equal 6,000. The standing dilemma of friend and foe is whether their story is best told from the inside—by those who know them—or from the outside—by those who can appraise them from a presumably more independent point of view. James J. Walsh, physician and vastly prolific litterateur, combines both qualifications, since he was six years a member of the Society (so writes from the inside), is a layman (so writes from the outside), and as man of the world has formed and cultivated numerous intimate Jesuit acquaintances (so from the outside inside). This present work is a tribute of affection, rather than a critical estimate.

As such a tribute, it is eloquent. With his faculty for gathering items of general interest and narrating them in the lively, popular language of the lecture platform, Dr. Walsh has drawn a many-colored picture of Jesuit activities in the United States from the earliest colonial days to the present day. He does not pretend to a systematic narrative. His choices have been determined from his reading and from his personal acquaintanceships. Hence the omissions and inclusions in a genial fire-side talk covering the observations and experiences of a life-time. True to the anecdotal sense, Dr. Walsh regales the reader with interesting and edifying tales of scholars, missionaries, and educators. Figures not only of the great and famous, such as Kino and DeSmet, but of such humble, forgotten saints as Fathers Duranquet and Prachensky of the municipal "Islands" in the New York Harbor, live again in his story, though Father Blumensaat might have been added to make a trio. The story is told again of Rasle and Bapst among the Indians of Maine, of Cataldo in the Northwest. Famous American pupils of the Jesuits are described, as Chief Justice White; and the beginnings of Georgetown and Fordham Universities recounted.

Some strange omissions stand out in the atmosphere of universality that Dr. Walsh has created. The entire Jesuit history of the Middle West seems to have dropped from the author's ken: no hint of Damen or Weninger, of the pioneers of the Mississippi Valley, of the great scholars and universities evoked by the names of Loyola University in Chicago, of St. Louis, Detroit, Marquette, etc. Three hundred years of Jesuit mission work in Maryland and Pennsylvania is also out of the picture entirely, save for a brief reference at the beginning to the first Jesuit companions of Lord Baltimore, where names are quite confused; and to some of the progenitors of Georgetown and the story of the Carrolls.

Dr. Walsh's well-known readiness to revise and correct his work will doubtless induce him to add a few pages in any further editions of his book, that will at least summarize these omitted elements—with the acknowledgment that they lie outside the author's personal experience—and thus complete the perspective.

JOHN LAFARGE.

Epic of Blood and Iron

LAND OF WOMEN. By Katharina Von Dombrowski. Little Brown and Company. \$2.50.

WHEN Jesuit missionaries were forced to abandon the Reductions they had established among the Guarani, their patient labors were undone and the land fell a prey to rapacious lay administrators who sucked the Indians dry of their wealth, while despotic *caudillos* drained the country of its blood. The suicidal elimination of the more cultured elements, which has continued ever since the colonial period, has generated the real problem of South America, the racial problem, the resurgence of the Indian. Since the civilizing, Christianizing efforts of the Catholic Church have been thwarted by clericalism, so-called liberalism, and militarism, the continent bids fair to revert to the degenerate sons of the pre-Conquest culture. Will the resurgence of the Indian restore the glories of the past primitive empires or will the Indian, neglecting the administrative genius of his forefathers, revive only the corruptions of a thinly veneered paganism? Will reborn paganism, containing within itself the seed of wide-spread immorality, dethrone the Virgin Mother for the Great Mother, will it forego the soul-elevating rites of Mother Church for the licentious cult of fertility?

Baroness Dombrowski takes but one phase of this cyclical trend, the self-liquidation of the Hispanic elements in Paraguay, aptly choosing her title to denote the Indian resurgence. Confronted by a wealth of gruesome facts in the history of a land where truth is still stranger than fiction, she has created an epic of blood and iron, the story of a vulture and a vampire, both feeders on men's blood and bodies. It is a tale of lust for power and of greed for gold, of Francisco Lopez and his Josephine—Eliza Lynch, an adventuress whose covetousness fires the dictator to stake all on war with Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. Aided by a sycophantic hierarchy, followed blindly by the Indians, the would-be Emperor of the New World unleashes the dogs of war, only to perish and with him nine-tenths of Paraguay's manhood. Interwoven throughout this story of blood and cruelty is the immutable Indian woman, eternally conscious of her mission, the perpetuation of the race, instinctively awaiting the Resurgence.

Though written fairly well, the work is a translation by the author; the very wealth of material has led her to crowd into one book what might have formed a trilogy. There is a consequent profusion of characters, a lack of unity confusing to the reader. However, richness of detail, and the intimate knowledge of Indian customs revealed by the author will well repay the reading.

A. J. OWEN.

Shorter Reviews

I WAS HITLER'S PRISONER. By Stefan Lorant. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.75.

A HUNGARIAN citizen and editor of the non-political *Müncher Illustrierte Presse*, Stefan Lorant was thrown into a Nazi prison and kept there six months for no avowed reason. His diary, recorded from day to day on odd scraps of paper, now appears in English translation, making a very readable book of 300 pages. The reviewer has no means of checking accuracy of detail, but there is about the whole an air of plausibility and objectivity that begets confidence in the writer. He is at times a bit cynical, but displays little bitterness or animosity against Hitler and his Government. The reader feels that

he is getting an authentic picture of unwarranted human suffering behind the scenes in the heart of the Bavarian capital, where during the past two years tourists saw nothing but peace and contentment and a nation reborn. The simple explanation of the sad plight of Lorant and his colleagues seems to be that the Party leaders wanted complete control of their influential publishing business. To this must be added the personal grudges of Party underlings and their greed for the property of the prisoners.

But aside from the human interest of the story which carries the reader along, the book affords a deeper insight into Hitlerism with all its strength, its soaring ambition, its hypocrisy, and its menace for the future. Anti-Semitism, the author assures us, was merely a blind. Less than ten per cent of the political prisoners were Jews. "The other prisoners are for the most part Catholics. The real fight is directed against them." The Jews constituting one per cent of the population can be divested of civil rights, but there are twenty million Catholics. National-Socialism may weather the economic crisis, but what of the struggle between the Swastika and the Cross?

On the whole, however, the author devotes little space to moralizing or to dark forebodings. His story has to do with the daily life of a cultured group of men in a common prison and with their efforts amid alternating hope and despondency to obtain a hearing. Police and wardens are humane; cruelty and savagery is the work of irresponsible youths of the Party. R. C.

A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. VOL. II. By Dom Charles Poulet. B. Herder Book Co. \$5.00.

THIS is the second volume translated and adapted from the fourth French edition of Dom Poulet's work. Like its predecessor (reviewed in AMERICA, February 16, 1935), this volume, too, has as translator the Rev. Sidney A. Raemers. Like its companion this concluding volume is eminently fitted to fill the immediately urgent needs of the inchoative theological student. More mature scholars, however, while admitting its convenience as a handy reference book offering easily obtainable general information, will sense the necessity of looking elsewhere for accuracy of detail and reliability of specific facts. Such defects are regrettable.

This second volume is divided into five parts. Part I deals with the "Reformation." Part II treats of "The Wars of Religion (1559-1648)." Part III gives a running account of "The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." Part IV carries the story forward through "The Nineteenth Century." And finally Part V neatly summarizes "Contemporary Church History." Thus the complete history of Protestantism is covered, and purely Catholic problems, as they successively arose, are tabulated and often succinctly disposed of. Among these latter, which merit more lengthy discussion, are included "Modernism," and the settlement of the long disconcerting "Roman Question." Included among "Texts and Documents" is a lengthy quotation from the Papal Encyclical "Pascendi" of Pope Pius X, exposing the deadly poison lurking within the teachings of this "synthesis of heresies." Essential articles both from the Treaty and the Concordat incorporated in the Lateran Agreement of February 11, 1929 are quoted. These and similar authentic documents dispersed through the pages of both volumes of this work greatly increase its value and multiply its usefulness. Synoptic charts excellently detailing important personages and events, together with an alphabetical index, conclude this second volume, as they did the first. M. J. S.

WHY WARS MUST CEASE. By Ten Writers. The Macmillan Company, \$1.00.

THIS volume, containing contributions by ten of America's women leaders, such as Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, and others, is a handbook of indictment

against war. The insanity, cost to civilization, uselessness of war as a means of settling human disputes, is proved convincingly with an imposing array of facts drawn from history and economics. The wastage of human life, the breeding of wars by war, the blight on innocent generations, are set forth competently with documentary thoroughness. The chapters on economic chaos by Florence Brewer Boeckel and on demoralization by Judge Florence E. Allen surprise one with the novelty and scope of the vista they open up. Nevertheless, the inevitable question remains: what are you going to do about it? Dorothy Canfield Fisher puts this question in her vigorous summing up at the end:

Nobody can doubt the soundness of the proofs set forth in this volume, of the idiotic, purposeless destructiveness—what one might call the murderous inanity of war. . . . Why then does the damnable institution continue to threaten our lives, and everything that makes those lives worth living?

With keen insight Mrs. Fisher points out that while war may be a nightmare to the comfortable intellectual, it may look very different to those robbed of the privileges of life. "How intolerable," she asks, "would an unemployed coal miner find barracks life? Or a sweatshop hand? Or a Negro just off the chain gang?" Indeed, just as this book has come off the press, Southern American Negroes are enlisting to fight against Italy in Abyssinia. Nor do the learned authors hint at the bewildering situation that the loudest outcry against war in the world today is being raised by a world Power that is building its armies up by slave labor, and planning to set the rest of humanity at its ears by civil strife. Such questions must be answered before the indictment of war can have its full effect. The statement on page 91 by Emily Newell Blair that in 1927 "a war to protect Mr. Doheny's Mexican interests was avoided," is inaccurate from several points of view. J. L. F.

Recent Non-Fiction

JANE ADDAMS OF HULL HOUSE. By Winifred E. Wise. Though originally intended as a biography for young people, the publishers have wisely transferred this life of Chicago's world-famous welfare worker to their general list. And, indeed, most adults are likely to read it with enjoyment and interest. It traces Jane Addams's career back to her earliest childhood and girlhood and through the long full years at Hull House. The author is well qualified for her task, having done volunteer work under Miss Addams, who herself gave permission for the use of quotations from letters and journals. There are many illustrations and a comprehensive bibliography. This is a particularly timely narrative of self-sacrifice. (Harcourt Brace. \$2.50)

DAYLIGHT, TWILIGHT, DARKNESS AND TIME. By Lucia C. Harrison. Teachers of geography as well as non-technical readers will find interest and information in this novel teachers' manual. The specific relationship of human affairs to latitudinal and longitudinal differences, the facts of variations in hours of daylight, twilight, and darkness, and the significant details of sun-behavior are translated into terms quite comprehensible to the general reader, and more than illuminating to the teacher. An accurate and interesting manual. (Silver Burdett. \$1.24)

CORNISH OF SCOTLAND YARD. By G. W. Cornish. The author, an ex-superintendent at Scotland Yard, has here set down many of the cases, unique and commonplace, that came before him over a period of about forty years. None of them was solved by flashing intuition or sheer mental brilliance, but by steady hard work. He presents them with a strict regard for the truth, which adds to their fascination. (Macmillan. \$2.00)

THE INTELLIGENCE GAME OF SECRET SERVICE CASES AND PROBLEMS. By McKay and Gerrard. Twenty-seven problems to test your ingenuity, attentiveness to details and clues, and intellectual acumen. They are all short—rarely over three pages—and brain teasers. Solutions are given, and rules and a method of scoring. (McBride. \$2.50.)

Communications

Letters to ensure publication should not, as a rule, exceed 500 words. The editors are not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. No attention will be paid to anonymous communications.

The Collar Sign

To the Editor of AMERICA:

In AMERICA, July 13th, Note and Comment, mention is made about the propriety of non-Catholic church organizations keeping their own true names; giving us our true name and the like.

Would you consider extending the scope of that propriety or even decency to non-Catholic clergymen wearing their own distinctive uniform, as, for instance, many of the Anglican clergy used to do, and let us have the two varieties of Roman collar, so called, exclusively to ourselves? It hardly seems possible that the reverence that is so often shown them is for their being clergymen, but rather it is for their being taken as true, unmarried Catholic priests. Might it seem too unkind to say that they know this?

Philadelphia.

ANDREW L. BOUWHUIS, S.J.

Would Make Them Conscious

To the Editor of AMERICA:

First, let me congratulate you for the clear and sane position you have taken in your articles on Father Coughlin. From his tactics I have often felt that he had in the past spent more of his time in study of the life of Rasputin than in the search of the Holy Word. Anarchy and bloodshed appear to be the only result if he continues his attempted leadership of the great unthinking masses. What I feared even more was that with the revolt from his leadership which would come to him, even as it has come to every other man who has attempted what he attempts, the Church would suffer great harm. Thus in your articles you have, through the analysis of his doctrines, saved not only our country but the Church from great harm.

But the real reason for this letter is the reading of your article, "Taxes on Great Wealth," in the issue for July 6. As a member of the great "middle class," I do not complain over paying my share of the cost of government. But I do question whether the money which I pay is as carefully expended by the Government as it would be if it were the disbursement of one of our great national corporations. In other words I would like to be assured that that portion of my earnings paid in taxes is as carefully handled as I would do it myself.

Another thought which comes to mind when I pay my local, State, or national taxes is whether those with whom I share the benefits of living in this land of liberty are as tax conscious as I am. Certainly every one should realize that when they go to the polls and vote for a large government expenditure, or for representatives who will make great outlays of money, they will have a part in paying for it. Is it not true that only a small portion of our population pay any direct tax while the great majority pay such small sums, and so indirectly, that they do not realize that they are contributing to government expenditure?

For instance, the man who rents either a home or place of business at a sum insufficient to cover taxes, insurance and reasonable maintenance and depreciation without any return on capital investment, does not share in taxation. The past years such a situation has been the rule rather than the exception in most parts of our country. Also with the high exemptions in both income and inheritance taxes, the great majority of our citizens make no contribution to the Government either during their life or at their death. Therefore, in considering additional sources of government income, let us have a base so broad and inclusive that at least ninety per cent of our adult population share in the direct taxation and so become tax conscious.

The thought in the last line of your article has particular bearing in the matter of taxes. Every thinking person is most anxious these days that the purchasing power of everyone may be increased and should make every effort to this end. And yet, the money which is paid in taxes cuts down the purchasing power of the individual whether he desires a million-dollar yacht or a twenty-five-dollar suit of clothes. Either one, if bought, would increase employment although the luxury of the millionaire would provide more employment than the necessity of the poor man. By increasing taxes and "soaking the rich" are we not just so much aiding unemployment and suffering? History shows that the periods of the greatest general prosperity have been those of decreasing government taxation rather than increasing. That the financial prosperity of the Church follows the prosperity of the masses, no one can deny.

Rochester, N. Y.

G. M. MINOT.

Musically Insolvent?

To the Editor of AMERICA:

The letter in AMERICA, July 6, "One Mass," opened a train of thought I often find compelling. I do not wish to undervalue the pious leaflet sent by the nun to friends; the leaflet has its mission too, but the account of the musical season in Eastern Pennsylvania where Catholics gathered to hear the great Bach Mass "rendered by Episcopalian, Lutheran and Moravian choirs and orchestra combinations" interested me. The complaint "that these various sects would all bitterly repudiate the Mass as a profound act of worship" is beside the question. The fundamental note is missing in this chord of complaint. The fact that Catholics have ignored, sold, or failed to value their great traditions is obvious. Are we ignorant of our rich inheritance in art, music, etc., even though our faith be aflame?

To most of us even the splendor of the ritual is unknown. We attend Mass, to be sure, at times perfunctorily perhaps. Were we but aware of the poetic significance of our prayers! Would we but stop and listen! For example, how many know the beauty of the Sequence of the succeeding feasts and their octaves of the Church calendar? The "Victimae Paschali" of Easter time, the "Veni Sancte Spiritus" of Pentecost, the "Lauda Sion" for Corpus Christi, the "Stabat Mater." Do they know the priest is reading them in his Mass, or the choir is singing them, or both?

The missal has opened this fund of exquisite knowledge to many, but many do not use the missal. Again, the daily Mass with school children singing from hymn books bought by the dozen for their use, books actually on the black list, (see "The White List of the Society of St. Gregory of America," J. Fischer, Publisher, N. Y.) where sentimental wording keeps pace with popular and trashy tunes while within reach is the reliable "Roman Hymnal" which is set aside for these mediocre later compilations. Compare these late hymn books with the Protestant Episcopal Hymn Book unmolested by time or by the latest song writer, and wise enough to utilize some of our own choice poems. And yet we are the inheritors of the ages in religion, art, culture. Have we sold our birthright, or are we culturally inadequate? If we are, then welcome the "various sects" and listen to their interpretation of what we call "our own."

Alton, Ill.

LUCY BIGGINS.

Another Good Idea

To the Editor of AMERICA:

Perhaps you would be interested to know of a new use we have found for AMERICA. The Sacred Heart Study Club of Stamford finds that when new members join, the placing of several issues of AMERICA in their hands does a fine introductory job. It instills Catholic thought into them, and prepares them for our work of Catholic Action. We heartily recommend AMERICA to similar clubs or groups.

Stamford, Conn.

ANTHONY T. MASSO,
President.

C h r o n i c l e

Home News.—The President, on July 16, received a delegation of twenty-two Congressmen, who presented a petition in behalf of Catholics in Mexico, signed by 242 Members of the House. Mr. Roosevelt personally wrote out a declaration espousing religious liberty. On July 12, he publicly took exception to the clause in the new banking bill restoring to banks the power of underwriting security issues. Over the week-end of July 13-15 he held a meeting with several governmental and political advisers on the legislative situation. As a result of this he stiffened his attitude in favor of immediate passage of the new tax proposals, and said that the movement to adjourn Congress now was anti-tax "propaganda." Congress continued its double inquiry into lobbying on the public-utility bill, and the Senate discovered instances of bogus telegrams against the bill and of burning of records. On July 15, the House loudly applauded a demand by Mr. Deen, of Georgia, for immediate adjournment, but the next day, under Administration pressure, voted by a large margin for continuance. Congress still had before it the important coal, liquor, TVA, AAA, and banking legislation, in addition to that on the new taxes. Slow progress was being made in the Senate on AAA legislation, doubt on its constitutionality being expressed as a result of the decision in Boston on the processing tax. The House had under immediate consideration the gold-clause bill, to be followed by the new bill for the Federal Alcohol Control Administration. Two court decisions went against the Administration. In Cincinnati the District United States Court of Appeals sitting there declared that the Government has no power under the Constitution to condemn private property, even for the purpose of slum clearance, for the reason that the ground was not for public use. This was a blow to PWA projects for better housing. In Boston, on July 16, the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, in a cotton-processing case, declared that the tax levied by the Secretary of Agriculture under the AAA is unconstitutional on the grounds that the products were in control of the State, that the tax is an improper delegation of power, and that as a tax it did not fulfill the conditions of either a direct tax or an excise. The AAA served notice of appeal and of continuing to levy the tax. Enormous sums would have to be returned to processors if the appeal is lost. Thus the second major project of the Administration stood in grave danger of annihilation. In another case, decided by a Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, that at New Orleans, the Administration won a victory. The Court reversed a decision of a lower court enjoining cities in Alabama from buying power from the TVA. The Circuit Court declared the Act constitutional, and said the Government was entirely within its rights in selling its own property, which in this case was the power produced and distributed from Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River.

Murder in Tabasco.—Twenty students who had flown to Villa Hermosa, capital of the State of Tabasco, to initiate a political movement against Garrido Canabal, dictator of that State, were fired upon by gunmen belonging to the Red Shirts; five were killed and several wounded, and the rest besieged in a house in which they had taken refuge. Garrido had, it will be recalled, retired to his State after the shake-up in General Cárdenas' cabinet, and had taken his gunmen back with him. While in Mexico City they committed many atrocities. Meanwhile President Cárdenas was making a tour of the northern and central States, and in his speeches made a special appeal for support to peasants and city workers. In one he threatened to re-arm the agrarians in support of his policies.

Italy Prepares.—Late last week it was estimated that Mussolini had mobilized more than 175,000 Italian soldiers for the coming war in Ethiopia. These men, together with native troops recruited in the colony and civilian workers, made up a force of 245,000 troops. A rumor was current to the effect that the Premier himself would soon start on a tour of inspection in Eritrea and the Somaliland, and the newspapers felt that probably the whole air force of the nation would be used in the campaign against Haile Selassie's army. In a statement made to the *New York Times*, the Emperor said he would refuse to accept an Italian zone of influence or the building of a railroad through his territory. Observers knew that Italy wanted much more than these two concessions and was aiming at nothing less than a protectorate. But they felt that if the Emperor refused the smaller concessions, he would certainly also refuse to surrender his independent rule over his domain. In fact, the foreign correspondents discovered an impasse in the situations both of the Premier and Haile Selassie. Such was the temper of the Ethiopian people and so precarious the Emperor's hold upon his throne, that any concession on his part to the Italians that seemed to indicate weakness or surrender would precipitate domestic troubles and serious difficulties with the local chieftains leading to the certain loss of his crown. At the same time it was said that the Premier had gone so far that he could no longer leave the colonies without a definite military victory over them. For him to withdraw his troops now and to accept any sort of compromise under actual warfare would mean a huge loss of prestige, the ruin of his regime, and probably even a revolution. In the United States, Secretary Hull expressed his intense interest in bringing about peace, and held conversations with the British and French Ambassadors. But it was not certain whether he would specifically invoke the Briand-Kellogg agreement or warn the Italian Duce of his obligations under it.

Nazi-Catholic Breach Widening.—Informed circles felt that the Vatican protest would not swerve the Reich Government from its anti-Catholic course. The Vatican note presented to Berlin was said to protest against continued violations of the Concordat, such as the applica-

tion of Nazi sterilization laws to Catholics, interference with the free existence of Catholic lay organizations, and attacks upon the freedom of the Catholic press. The Vatican was reported as taking the view that the opposition to the Catholic Church in Germany was officially sanctioned. The German press failed to print the note of protest from the Vatican. A decree was issued by Dr. Wilhelm Frick, Minister of the Interior, providing heavy penalties for propaganda against sterilization. Dr. Robert Ley, leader of the German Labor Front, addressing a meeting of students, attacked Catholic youth organizations. "They are organized like an army," he said. "The necessity for unity of German youth for whom Hitler's youth organization was established is in accordance with the Fuehrer's will." A Nazi radio speaker in a national broadcast declared: "The way to God is the way our Fuehrer has shown us. The great men of our people have not found their way to God in the church of pews." Count Cleinens von Galen, Bishop of Muenster, answered the attacks made upon him by Cultural Director Alfred Rosenberg. Father Julian Allais, Dominican friar of French nationality, and the Rev. Ernst Vorage, treasurer of the Lazarist Order, were sentenced to imprisonment for alleged violations of exchange regulations. A police decree, issued by Gen. Hermann Goering, head of the Secret State Police, was aimed at the Catholic Church. It was sent out to police authorities throughout the entire Reich with the knowledge and approval of Chancellor Hitler and was regarded as the first official move in the Nazi anti-Catholic campaign. Explanations of Catholic doctrines which happen to conflict with Nazi ideology will be treated as assaults on the Government's authority.

Belfast's Religious Riots.—Beginning on Friday, July 12, and continuing through an entire week, the Orangemen of Northern Ireland burst into violent disorders and anti-Catholic persecution. The Orangemen held a huge parade in Belfast on July 12, in celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, which resulted in the firm establishment of Protestantism in Ulster. Speeches and banners incited the Orangemen not only to Protestant loyalties but to hatred of Catholics. In the evening, revellers returning to Belfast after they had staged a mock battle thirty miles away, provoked fights along York Street, near the business section of the city. Missiles were hurled and shots were fired before the police could control the rioting. Three persons, including a Catholic woman, were killed, and about forty were injured. Protestant agitators who had instigated the anti-Catholic attacks in Edinburgh two weeks previously and unidentified gunmen hostile to the British regime further incensed the rioters, so that again on the night of July 13, another battle was fought in York Street and the nearby areas. Another man was shot and about twenty were wounded. The Belfast authorities, despite the help of soldiers and police brought from other Counties, were unable to prevent disorders from breaking out on the nights following. Believing that Catholics were responsible for some shots fired while one of the victims was

being buried, the Orangemen raided the Catholic section of the city, burning homes, breaking into stores and looting, and committing outrages, such as setting fire to a bed in which lay a woman with her one-day-old baby. Some arrests were made, but no judicial findings were available at the present writing.

Trade Agreement with Soviet.—A trade agreement was signed on July 13, in Moscow, by the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Governments, respectively. The agreement represents certain tariff concessions by the United States, offering this country a more extended market for certain goods, while the Soviets promise purchases from the United States. It does not offer Russia a most-favored-nation treatment, nor are there mutual tariff concessions. Says the text of the accord, relative to Soviet purchases promised:

This figure [\$35,000,000 during the next twelve months] represents an increase of more than one hundred per cent over the value of American exports to the Soviet Union in 1934 and an increase of about one hundred fifty per cent over the average exports during the three-year period 1932 to 1934, inclusive.

On its part, the Government of the United States has extended to the Soviet Union the tariff concessions which have been granted under the trade agreements with Belgium, Haiti, and Sweden.

One of the Soviet Government's principal purchases, it was reported, would be material for repairing its transportation system.

French Financial Decrees.—In three meetings held in one day at the Quai d'Orsay Premier Laval and his Finance Minister Marcel Régnier persuaded the Cabinet to approve their drastic measures for a saving of 11,000,000,000 francs on the budget. The measures were brought to the Elysée Palace, where President Le Brun signed them and they became effective immediately. About twenty-nine decrees were put into force. These made a reduction of ten per cent in government salaries and pensions of more than 10,000 francs per year, and applied a sliding scale of reductions to salaries under that amount. Simultaneously a ten-per-cent reduction was made in the payments on Government coupons. A fifty-per-cent surtax was laid upon incomes amounting to 80,000 francs per year. The tax on securities was lifted from seventeen to twenty-four per cent. The tax on munition and armament manufacturers was raised by twenty-five per cent. At the same time the Government ordered a ten-per-cent reduction in rents for all house holders paying less than 10,000 francs annually. The price of bread was ordered reduced, and a five-per-cent cut in future for all gas and electric users. It was estimated that these measures would save about 7,000,000,000 francs, which, together with drastic economies in railroad operation and local expenditures, would make up the total of 11,000,000,000. Observers admitted that the Premier had done a courageous bit of work and that he had completely obeyed the Chamber of Deputies' orders to avoid the devaluation of the franc by reducing both the state's and the citizen's living costs to the present world value of the franc. Of

course there were immediate reactions, and protest meetings were organized. But the Government forbade these meetings so as "to allow the economic defense of the franc and the nation to be pursued in calm."

Berlin Anti-Semitic Rioting.—Bands of Nazis, many of them attired in Storm Troop boots and trousers, invaded Berlin's fashionable Kurfuerstendamm, and staged a violent anti-Semitic riot. Jews were kicked and beaten by the ferocious mob; stores and cafes were smashed. Large crowds lined up on both sides of the street, stopped all cars and dragged out Jewish-looking men and women. Police arrived but made no effort to protect the victims. The outbreak, said to be the worst since the Nazi emergence to power, appeared to be the result of a report in the Nazi paper, *Voelkischer Beobachter*, that Jews had booed a Swedish anti-Semitic moving picturing playing in Berlin. The newspaper said: "Such insolence is not to be endured." The rioting started in front of the photograph house. British veterans visiting Berlin were received by Chancellor Hitler. Optimistic estimates issued recently in Berlin would indicate that Germany expected favorable crops this year and would be virtually self-sustaining as far as grains were concerned.

Paul and Carol Meet.—Austria was presumably the subject of discussion between Prince Paul, Regent of Yugoslavia, and King Carol of Rumania, in their meeting at Sinaia, in Rumania, on July 12. Although nothing was disclosed as to the purpose of the meeting, which was officially a family affair, solemnity was given to it by the presence of the Cabinet Ministers. The question of the proposed Danubian pact involves the thorny question of the restoration of the Hapsburgs, which recently was broached in eastern European circles as the alternative to the union of Austria and Germany. It involved also the question whether Rumania should follow the lead of Yugoslavia in taking a friendly attitude towards Germany, or should lean to the Czechoslovakian policy of following the French suspicion of Germany's intentions. At the same time, General George Kondylis, Greek Minister of War, arrived July 14 in Belgrade, where he was awaiting the return of Prince Paul. General Kondylis was believed to be interested in obtaining Yugoslavia's abstention from any interference with plans for the restoration of the monarchy in Greece.

Chaco Negotiations.—The Peace Conference formally opened on July 15 and it was reported that all the preliminary steps provided by the protocol signed on June 12 were progressing smoothly so that a definite end of the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay was anticipated. Reports from the Vatican City noted that in presenting his credentials as Ambassador of Bolivia to the Holy See early in the month David Alvestegui publicly thanked Pope Pius for his efforts towards peace in the Chaco dispute and expressly pointed out that through the solicitude of His Holiness it was possible to bring about an armistice, a moment of relief in the cruelty of strife, and

also through the Holy Father's mediation Bolivia had returned to her her seriously wounded soldiers. On July 17 Dr. Daniel Salamanca, war-time President of Bolivia, died at the age of sixty-six. Half of his life had been spent in public service. He was elected President November, 1930, and took office in March following, after a military junta had been temporarily in control. The forces which overthrew President Siles in 1930 forced him from a university teaching position to political life. In the election he polled 50,000 votes. Ill health and an ultra-conservative political policy that made his regime somewhat unpopular forced his resignation in 1934 leaving his office to Vice-President Jose Louis Tejada Sorzano. Two of Dr. Salamanca's sons served in the Chaco War, one of them being killed in action in October, 1933. The election following Dr. Salamanca's resignation was refused confirmation by Congress on the score that most of the voters were on the Chaco front, and Mr. Tejada was left indefinitely as Provisional President. With the soldiers back from the front it was anticipated that the deferred Presidential elections would be held in the middle of August.

Lloyd George Plan Rejected.—In a White Paper issued by the Cabinet were given the reasons for the rejection of the scheme offered by Lloyd George to Stanley Baldwin, now Prime Minister, in January last for the rehabilitation of Great Britain. The scheme called for the expenditure of £250,000,000, raised on a government loan, for public works; it also included a reconstruction of the governorship of the Bank of England whereby industrial and commercial interests would be recognized. Mr. Baldwin stated the scheme was impracticable and that England had actually recovered from the depression.

Austrian Chancellor in Auto Crash.—Dr. Kurt Schuschnigg narrowly escaped death and his wife was killed when their automobile crashed into a tree near Linz in Upper Austria. The accident was attributed to a defective steering gear. Rumors were spread that the Heimwehr intended to seize power. No indication of such a purpose was evident.

President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia has written his memoirs and they are so full of notable things to interest Catholics that John LaFarge will devote a special article to them next week: "A President Reviews His Life."

How a library on wheels goes around to prisoners in Connecticut will be told next week by Genevieve Cowles in an article, called "Parnassus on Wheels," after her caravan.

Augusta L. Francis, writer of delightful prose will present another of her Roman sketches for our readers. It will be "Castelli Romani."

The article on book collecting by Alan Devoe called "Collecting Association Items," will appear next week.